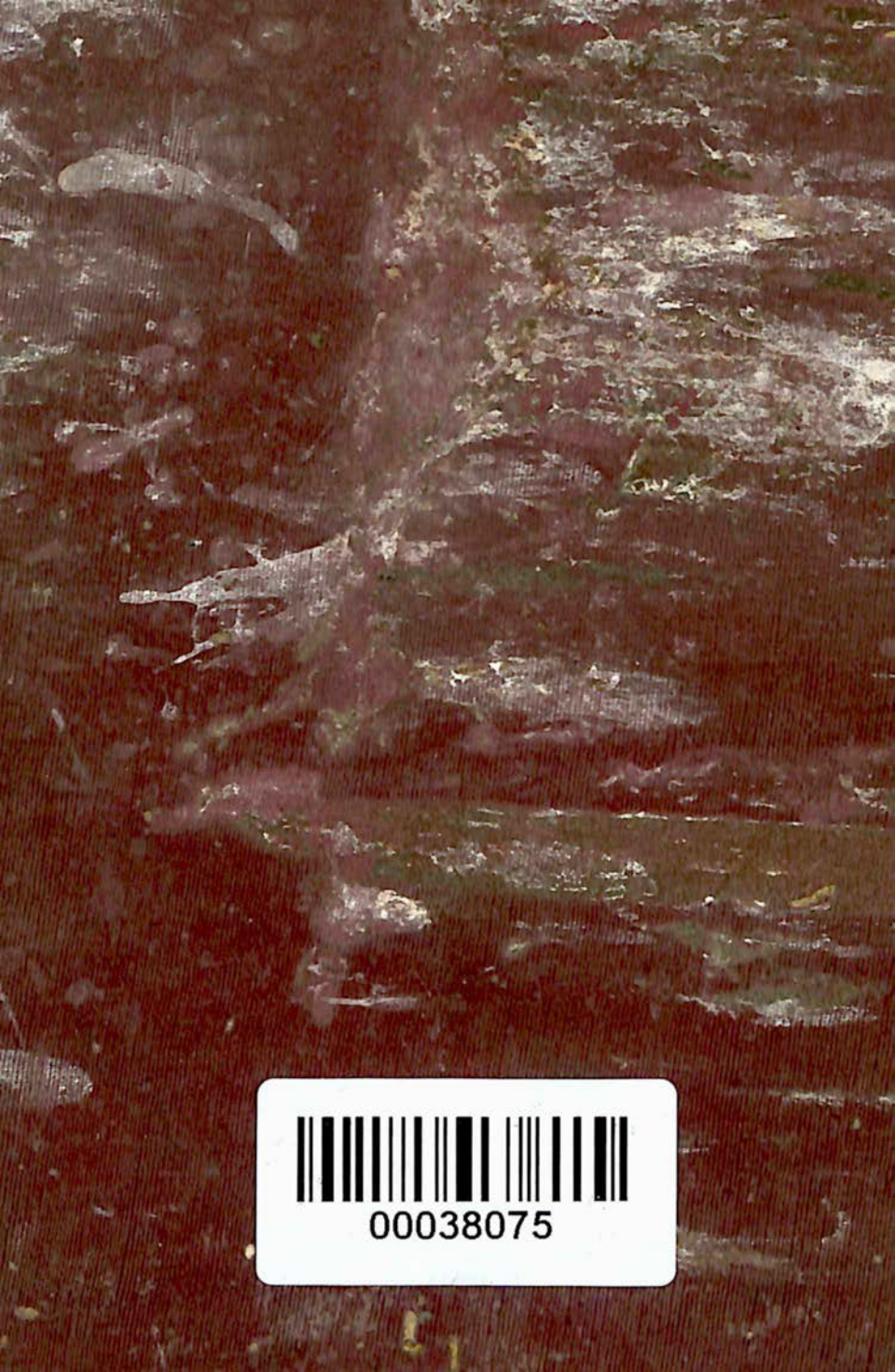
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NORTHUMBERLAND,

AND

THE BORDER.

38075

BY

WALTER WHITE,

AUTHOR OF "A LONDONER'S WALK TO THE LAND'S END," "A MONTH IN YORKSHIRE," ETC.

"How many diseases doth domesticall rest breed a man! At home the gout, at home the infirmity of the handes, at home diseases of the feete, at home consumptions do reigne, and do accompany our domesticall chaire, our domesticall pillowes, and our softer beddes, which are oftentimes cured with meere motion and travell."—*Hermannus Kirchnerus.*

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NORTHUMBERLAND,

AND

THE BORDER.

CHAPTER I.

FROM MIDDLESEX TO CUMBERLAND.

WHO is for a holiday between the Tyne and the Tweed?

I am for one: and my heart rejoices at sight of the hills as the train speeds into the valley of the Lune, where the broad heathery slopes, and the crystal stream rippling blithely over pebbly shallows, are lit by the red and gold of a gorgeous sunset. What a delightful ending to a summer day's journey, the first day of July, from London to the mountains; from pastures mown and cleared, and wheatfields yellow with promise of a bountiful harvest, to northern meadows that wait for the scythe, and fields of grain yet green in the ear! The common rapidly-shifting landscape animates the sense of freedom inspired by a holiday; and leagues of hedgerows, and acres of woods, and quiet villages, and ancient manors, and far-off church-towers appear to an eye escaped from metropolitan streets, as fresh and new as the stars in heaven.

Even the smoky region in the county of the Red Rose robs us not of our gladness, though Nature there appears cruelly vexed; for with us 'tis holiday. Crossing the Ribble reminds us of our last year's walk in Craven; glimpses of Yorkshire hills appear in the east; then Lancaster rises before us, a cone of houses clean and picturesque, crowned by the castle; then the broad blue flashing waters of Morecambe Bay open on the west; anon Kendal is seen, a gray and twinkling patch on the green slope of a distant vale; and soon we are under the dark shadows of the hills.

Then Shap, a bleak-looking place even in summer; and the sight of the great wild sweep of the fells reminds me of my struggle through snowdrifts there in early days. New to the hill-country, I thought it sport at starting to see the vast white landscape, to plough through the levels, and take a leap at the ridges; but was sobered when the grim wintry daylight failed and evening overtook me, with nine miles yet to walk.

A pause at Clifton gives us time to look out upon the place where the dragoons and Highlanders had a sharp skirmish in the Forty-five. It was nightfall when the Duke of Cumberland came up, and he would have fallen into ambuscades, had not a certain Jonathan Savage stolen out, and warned him thereof. The Duke, says our historian, took up his quarters in the house of Thomas Savage the Quaker, "who rejoiced much in spirit."

Seeing, as I lean from the carriage-window, that the place has somewhat of the wild, ragged appearance of an American settlement, with stacks of wood here and there, I ask, "Station-master, does anybody ever get out here?"

"Oh, yes," he answers, with a smile, "a deal. Excursions get out here to go and see Ulleswater. We had one last week."

Then trees overshadow us as we speed along, and from a high viaduct we glance for an instant upon the sylvan course of the Lowther; and presently, the ruinous old castle looks imposing, as, our long journey ended, we alight at Penrith: more imposing in the cool dim twilight than in sunshine.

Sweet is the pleasure of going home, as we all know; but what can equal the pleasure of going forth? To rise ere the dawn has lost its rosy blush on a fine summer morning, and feel that you are free to go whithersoever you will; to wander as inclination prompts for the whole of a summer month, and with feet as willing to stir as your heart to enjoy—what pleasure can equal that? Before you stretches a long vista of anticipations; a plan floats loosely in your mind, to be shaped day by day, or hour by hour, and there is a sense of power and quiet satisfaction in the reflection that the shaping depends chiefly on your own wayfaring capabilities. Where among robust pleasures can this be matched?

It is as if a sceptre were placed in your hand by virtue of which you become a monarch, going forth on a progress; not with glittering train or cumbrous ceremonial, but with health, imagination, and fancy as attendants. Yet more than royal pomp may be yours; for your matins and vespers shall glow with the splendours of the eastern and western sky, and in the blaze of noon there shall be around you the garniture of woods, and your pathway shall be strewn with flowers. You shall be careless of measured hours: why should a king count time who can do what he

will, whose days are to be reckoned, not by minutes, but by happy emotions? For my part, I can clap my hands and sing when the social yoke is loosened, and I am fairly off, with no heavier burden than my knapsack.

I turn my steps northwards once more, actuated by the same desire as in the former year, to revisit long-remembered scenes while exploring new ones. It may be that in renewing acquaintance with historical land-marks, we shall meet again with names and personages already familiar to us; and we will make it a pleasure to recognise them in passing.

One word more, gracious reader: If I begin my story in Cumberland, do not be impatient, and insist upon the title-page as a rigorous text; but consider the appeal with which this chapter begins, and remember that my beginning is within sight of the hill on which rises the South Tyne—a branch of the great Northumbrian river. To the Sea-Kings every wind was favourable, for, wherever borne they conquered; so to an Englishman, any starting-place within his own country will be fortunate, for travel whithersoever he will, he finds something lovely and of good report; some nobleness of the Past that shall make our Present nobler; some triumph of industry to inform the mind and rouse its admiration; and, with all this, faults and blots which he may help to wipe away, and still be a conqueror. He finds, moreover,—

> "Dreams that the soul of youth engage
> Ere Fancy has been quelled;
> Old legends of the monkish page,
> Traditions of the saint and sage,
> Tales that have the rime of age,
> And chronicles of Eld."

CHAPTER II.

Penrith—Beacon Pike—Old Times—The Last Tree—The Queen's Hames—The Giant's Grave—Who was the Giant?—Isey Perlis—The Giant's Thumb—The Cockatrice Killer—Eamont Brig—A Welcome—Canny aul Cummerlan—The Round Table—King Arthur—The Maybrough—Lowther Brig—Reminiscence of the Forty-five—Brougham Hall—Antiquities—The Skull and Prickspur—An Agreeable Survey—View from the Tower—Crossfell—The Windsor of the North—Lady Clifford's Chapel—Miraculous Font—The Countess's Pillar—Hart's-horn Tree—Brougham Castle—The Oratory—The Feast of Brougham.

My recollections of Penrith were less favourable than it deserves, as I saw on the morrow when looking down from the Beacon Pike on a landscape agreeably diversified by hill and dale, woods and waters, and signs of fruitful culture. The view combines richness with grandeur; for scattered around lie the well-planted domains of ancient families, and in the distance rise the mountains of the Lake country—the pride of Cumberland—and a gleamy level in a break on their margin, shows where Ulleswater spreads its broad surface to the sun. The prospect is a glad surprise, and well repays the time spent in the ascent.

In the days when the the Scottish kings claimed Cumberland as their principality, the region between Penrith and "merry Carlisle," a distance of sixteen miles, was overgrown by the forest of Inglewood: "a goodly great forest," says the chronicle of Lanercost, "full of woods, red deer and fallow, wild swine, and

all manner of wild beasts." Edward I. might well find time, with brief tarrying during one of his advances upon the north, to kill two hundred bucks! Many a gallant chase with horn and hound, has there been run. And there through hundreds of years marched hostile armies; and fierce outlaws, and wild mosstroopers hurried for slaughter and pillage, harassing the inhabitants, and vexing the soul of the Lord Warden of the Marches, whose proclamation for all under his authority, both horse and foot, to "prepare their arrediness and come forward with ten days victuals," was in perpetual request. If, one time the Scots succeeded in carrying off four thousand cattle; the next, they were so sorely beset by the English, "that they never durst go out for victuailles, nor give their bodies to sleep." Yet they inspired so much terror, that watchers, armed and mounted, were stationed day and night at all the fords, and the known approaches to the county. They even stole the lead from the church to cut up for bullets; for nothing came amiss to them. See what the town records say in the year 1600:—"This Tyme was great spoiling and robing in this countrie, especially in Cumberland, burning in Gilsland, and other places;" and the following year: "such watching in Penreth on the night as was not a hundreth yeres before, fiftie watchers nightlie." No wonder the civilisation of the northern counties is so recent compared with that of the south! And yet ten thousand of these same borderers, armed with flails, scythes, and other implements, took to flight, as chaff before the wind, on the approach of the Pretender's little army of Highlanders; perhaps because Nicolson bishop of Carlisle was one of their commanders.

Among old stagecoach travellers there are some who remember the last tree of Inglewood Forest, a venerable oak standing on Wragmire Moss, not far from the great North Road, where it had been known as a boundary mark full six hundred years. It fell from sheer old age in June, 1823. What a relic! still outstretching in the days of postchaises and of fugitive lovers hurrying to wed at Gretna, the branches that began to grow ere William Rufus sent a colony of southern husbandmen to teach the foresters how to till the soil.

Turning from the prospect to the hill on which we stand, we find it thickly covered with trees from base to summit, and paths and roads zigzagging up the slope, through the stone quarry, and across broken ground, which diversify the ascent. The beacon tower on the top was built in 1719, and belongs now to the Earl of Lonsdale. The trees crowd so closely around, as to hide it at the distance of a few yards, and at the same time narrow the view over the country below. To set the axe at work among them would widen the prospect, and yet more repay the climb.

Penrith exhibits some of those rude and primitive features peculiar to the small towns of these northern counties, as well as the incongruities arising out of a sudden stride in civilisation, and the attempt to make gas, plateglass, and fancy graining, harmonise with the unpretending houses of the fifteenth century. Here and there you may still see a thatched roof, and "post and panel" in the walls. Before the old timbered town-hall was burnt down, by a party of strolling players, you would have seen the cognisance of the bear and ragged staff predominant among its ornamental carving; for as we are told, "the great Earle

of Warwick disdained not to be marshall-steward, and captaine of the Honour of Penrith and villages adjoining, called in Queen Elizabeth's time, the Queen's Hames." The portrait of his daughter, Cicely Neville, still appears in the stained glass of the church window, along with one of her husband, Richard Plantagenet. This glass, and some of the monuments, are relics preserved when the church itself was rebuilt at the beginning of the last century.

In the churchyard, near Death's Door, as the north door of a church is sometimes called, stands a memorial of the days of the giants; and it will not be the fault of sexton, innkeeper, or waiter, or any one who may have speech with you in Penrith, if you fail to see it. He was a proper giant who lies buried there, if the two tapering stones, placed fifteen feet apart, give his true measure. They are about ten feet high, and show on their weather-stained surface, dim traces of carving. The space between them is occupied by a double row of flat semicircular stones placed edgewise, marking the sides of the grave, and representing, as some antiquaries think, the rude forms of wild boars or swine. Who was the giant? One Ewain Cæsarius, says tradition, who died fourteen hundred years ago, and the double row of curved stones denote the animals which he slew. Old Sandford, whose description of Cumberland is preserved among the manuscripts in the cathedral library at Carlisle, has a passage concerning this giant, which is worth quoting. A stranger, he says, having come to Penrith, and taken up his quarters at the Crown Inn, desired that certain discreet burgesses of the town should be invited to sup with him, and the landlord brought in the steward and schoolmaster. In the conversation that followed,

the stranger gave them to understand that he came to see the antiquities, and drew forth—

"A paper that said, that Sir Hugh Cesario lived in desert place in a Rocke: a marshallman: like knight errant: killing monster, man, & beast. The place he lived in caled Isey Perlis, wher a little from thence is 3 vaults in a Rocke, 100 men may live in: and he was buried in the north side of the church ith green feilds. And they went to the Church, and on the north side ther is 2 crosses distant the Lenth of a man, one at head an other at feet. And was opened when I was Scoller there, by William Turner, & there found the great Long shank bones and other bones of a man, and a broad Sword besides, fonde then by the Churchwardens."

It is a curious story. Some incredulous persons reject it altogether, and contend that the two tall stones were once crosses placed in the churchyard for ornament, and that the stones between them, carved with the Warwick boar, were used as a temporary support for coffins. But most hold with the giant, and point to the Giant's Thumb, standing but a few paces distant (the broken shaft of a cross) as corroborative testimony. What with the giants, and the monsters which, as we are told, used to haunt Inglewood Forest, and the cockatrice that infested the parish of Renwick, Cumberland must have been an uncomfortable abode for well-disposed people. Did champions go forth to slay the cockatrice? We read that the Tallentire family used to claim exemption from tithes, because one of their number had slain the creature in the old, old times.

We shall see the giant's dwelling-place before the day is over; meanwhile, let us walk a mile or so on

the road into Westmoreland, and look at King Arthur's Round Table. We come to the Eamont, a pretty stream, the boundary of the counties, flowing out of Ulleswater, and the little village of Yemmont Brig, as the natives pronounce it. At the northern end of the bridge stands a publichouse, with a legible WELCOME TO CUMBERLAND written on its wall, and a sign over the door, which absurdly enough represents a kilted Highlander holding out his hand to an honest yeoman. The landlord could give no reason for the presence of the Gael; nor could he remember that the kilt had ever been part of Cumbrian costume, or that his countrymen were hospitable by proxy.

"We help yen anudder, we welcome the stranger,"

sings the native bard, in his own rustic dialect, as with over-brimming heart he praises *Canny aul Cummerlan.*

"Yer buik-larn'd wise gentry, that's seen mony a county,
May wreyte, preach, palaver, an brag as they will,
O' mountains, lakes, vales, rocks, woods, watters, rich meedows,
But canny aul Cummerlan caps tem aw still!
We've nae sheynin palaces thro' this weyde county,
Nor lofty gran towers to catch the waak eye;
But mony aul castles, where fught our brave fadders
When Cummerlan cud ony county defy."

But we cross over into Westmoreland, and find what we are seeking in a meadow at the end of the village, where a byeway turns off for Patterdale. The Table is a large circular plot, surrounded by a broad trench about three feet deep, as thickly covered with grass as all the rest of the meadow. The trench forms a complete ring except on the south, where it is crossed by a neck which gives access to the great circle from the ground beyond. Standing on this neck, and noticing how the approach to its outer extremity lies between

two low mounds, you guess the Table to have been the site of a small camp with earthworks at the entrance. Better, perhaps, to resign ourselves to tradition, which places here that Round Table, established "to teach heroical minds not to stand upon place, but merit;" the fame of which seems destined never to perish. Hither came they,

> "The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
> Whereof this world holds record."

And the place, which has nothing romantic about it, which is bordered by two roads, and overlooked by a small gaswork, appeals strongly to the imagination with its legends treasured out of the mists of bygone ages. And who is there that sympathises not with the heroic monarch when he says to Sir Bedivere,

> "I think that we
> Shall never more, at any future time,
> Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
> Walking about the gardens and the halls
> Of Camelot, as in the days that were,
> Though Merlin sware that I should come again
> To rule once more;—but let what will be, be."

Go a little way up the bye-road and cross the field to the clump of trees on the right. Those trees shelter and adorn the Maybrough, an ancient fort, how ancient is not easy to tell; but you see that it was constructed by piling up a great ring of stones of all sizes. Here and there they peep out; but time and vegetation have converted the huge fence into a mound on which the trees form a thick circular grove, pleasant to loiter in on a summer day. Antiquaries believe it to be an early British work. The inner space is a level sward, with a large stone against which a tall ash flattens its stem, standing in the centre: from this stone to the

inner edge of the ring I made fifty-four strides. At one side are a few remains of small walled inclosures; but you will perhaps take interest in the place more for its nature than its antiquity. It is cool and quiet, and as delightfully shaded and as much resorted to by birds as that pleasant enclosure where Basing House once stood in Hampshire, which, indeed, the Maybrough very much resembles in general features.

I came back to the highroad and followed it for about half a mile farther. On the left spreads a broad park, separated from the road by the Lowther flowing cheerfully under belts of overhanging trees. Presently, another bridge—Lowther brig—the centre pier resting on an islet from which grows a tree overtopping the parapet. I ran down the bank to get a view through the arches, and to listen to the music of the water as it rippled along its shallow and stony bed. How refreshing that music is; and doubly sweet when heard for the first time after months of city life! With what pleasure we renew our impression of its liquid tones, recovering some that had been forgotten, and therewith a fuller sense of happiness.

That bridge recalls another incident of the Forty-five. There, Lord George Murray, marching wearily on with the rear-guard, along the worst of roads in that drear December evening, found Macpherson of Cluny posted at the head of his clan, to cover the retreat. Animated by the unexpected support, the Highlanders faced about, made a sudden charge upon the Duke's dragoons, who came pressing hotly on in pursuit, and routed them completely. Cluny brought off the artillery, and entered Penrith with flying colours; "nor did the Duke of Cumberland," says the historian, "ever afterwards dare to come within a day's march of

the Prince and his army during the course of all that retreat."

Just beyond the bridge the embrasured tower of Brougham Hall peeps above the great masses of foliage on the left. It has an imposing look as you ascend the avenue, and pass between walls of stone and solid rock to the entrance, in a low tower on the level above. When the heavy oaken gate swings back, and you see the court-yard, the porch, and cloistered passage of the hall, the mullioned windows and varied outline of the roof above, the shrubs and flowers and plots of grass, and the range of buildings on the right half hidden by an exuberant mantle of ivy, you will not find fault with your first impression. Here, say the antiquaries, was once the Roman station of Brovacum, or Brovoniacum; and if we look into a recess behind the ivy we shall see Roman altars, inscriptions, and sculptures which have been found from time to time on the spot, and are there preserved as memorials of the past.

The door stood hospitably open, but on stepping into the entrance hall from the sunshine, it was some minutes before I could see its details, so dim, lit by stained glass windows, did it appear by contrast. Presently I could discern suits of armour, weapons, antlers, shields, banners, a carved oak screen, the beams of the roof, and the great fireplace with a pile of logs on the hearth, ready to blaze their welcome to the ample recess. In one corner hangs the forester's horn; in another a sword, said to have belonged to a knight-crusader, Udard de Broham, who came home from the wars against the Saracen, was governor of Appleby Castle in 1174, when William the Lion overran Westmoreland with fire and sword, and was buried

at last in the little church by the side of the river, where what remains of him may still be seen lying cross-legged along with others of the family. In a recess near the fireplace are displayed sundry pieces of silver gilt plate, and conspicuous among them a curious mortal relic, a skull, taken from the family vault, pierced by a Norman prick-spur, which is firmly rusted in the bone. It was found during the alterations made by Mr. William Brougham in 1846. The stained glass in the windows is of German manufacture, representing mediæval scenes and costumes, rich in colour and character. You might spend hours in poring over the subjects there depicted. The hall is supplied with gas from the works near the Round Table, and when lighted up has an imposing effect.

Favoured by a letter of introduction from Lord Brougham, I saw the hall under very agreeable conditions—the guidance of an amiable young lady, accompanied by a learned antiquary who happened to be in the house on a visit. From the great apartments on the ground floor, with their Cordovan leather, and tapestry, and paneling, their books and pictures, from my lord's room, with its simple furniture, we mounted to the bed-rooms, where Buhl and marquetrie, oaken carvings and silken hangings and needlework vary the decorations. The old carved bedsteads are rare specimens of the elaborate cages in which the proud barons of the fifteenth century used to sleep. One of them, carved with the arms of the Talbots, was in ancient days part of the furniture of Sheffield Castle—a suggestive relic. You cannot help fancying that Queen Mary the hapless rested thereon while she was in custody of the Earl of Shrewsbury. The Norman room has a handsome chimney-piece, set off by a bold zigzag moulding,

and the stone walls are carved from ceiling to floor with the pattern described as wattle-work.

Then by irregular passages and a narrow winding stair we mounted to the top of the tower. The prospect is wider far than that seen from the Beacon Pike, for it stretches away on the east to Crossfell, which there rears its long, sombre, mountain-like mass against the horizon. On that wild range rise the Tees and the Tyne. The barren touches here and there heighten the effect of the woods, fields, and meadows. A long sinuous forest marks the course of the valley of the Lowther, embosoms Lowther Castle, and relieves the lofty red sandstone viaduct by which it is spanned. Yanwath tower is in sight, once a border fortress, now a private residence; and whichever way we look we behold scenes memorable in history or tradition, and while gazing thereon from this lofty elevation, or from the flower-bedecked terrace beneath, we see why Brougham has come to be called the Windsor of the North.

A bridge thrown across the deep road by which you approach from the avenue gives access to the chapel. This is a small edifice, built by that famous Lady Anne Clifford. Among the changes it has since undergone it was for some time used as a barn, but now contains a carved oak screen, carved stalls, good painted glass in the narrow windows, shields here and there on the walls, an organ divided into three portions, to economise space, and a font which, so says tradition, used to keep itself supplied with water from St. Wilfred's well; but that was in the days when the sun went round the earth, and saints thought it worth while to work miracles. Very agreeable did I find it to have the antiquary's explanations diversified by a young lady's lively remarks.

Then the antiquary, who was good-natured as well as learned, volunteered to accompany me to Brougham Castle, a ruin about a mile distant. The way lies along a pleasant avenue which, though now shortened by fields, looks as if it had formerly stretched in a continuous line from the hall to the fortress. We talked about the Countess's Pillar, and the Hart's-horn Tree, the one a memorial of filial love and charity, the other of a gallant chase, as Wordsworth relates in two of his sonnets. The pillar still stands by the wayside as you go to Appleby; but the tree is gone—dead of old age.

A Norman keep, the remains of towers, and traces of inclosing walls, make up a ruin which pleases the eye, rising on a grassy slope, past which the Eamont curves with cheerful noise. Above the entrance appears an old inscription, This made Roger, which perpetuates the name of one of the Cliffords to whom the castle passed from its first owners, the Viponts. Edward Baliol was once entertained here, and it was during his visit that a single hound chased a deer to Scotland and back, as commemorated by the Hart's-horn Tree and the bard of Rydal. Now the neighbouring farmer lodges cattle in the darksome chambers, and the gateway is forbidding to dainty feet; but once in you have soft green turf to walk upon. The keep is open to the sky; at the top in the thickness of the wall is a small oratory in which the former lords might still perform their devotions though all the rest of the castle should be in the hands of the enemy. The lower part of the stair is broken away; but I scrambled up and mounted to the little cell, which has all the appearance of a miniature chapel.

While standing there on the ruined wall, looking at the view without, or down on the decay within, we

think once more of the "good Lord Clifford," and the lusty welcome and the wassail that hailed his restoration:—

"Knight, squire, and yeoman, page and groom,
We have them at the feast of Brough'm.
How glad Pendragon—though the sleep
Of years be on her!—she shall reap
A taste of this great pleasure, viewing,
As in a dream, her own renewing.
Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem
Beside her little humble stream;
And she that keepeth watch and ward,
Her statelier Eden's course to guard:
They both are happy at this hour,
Though each is but a lonely tower;—
But here is perfect joy and pride,
For one fair House by Eamont's side,
This day, distinguished without peer,
To see her master, and to cheer
Him, and his lady-mother dear."

I had been hospitably notified of the hour when lunch would be ready; so having sauntered and mused about the ruin we walked back to the hall, and joined the family party in a pleasant room looking out upon the terrace. Two of the guests were Frenchmen: they had seen the Lakes and thought the scenery enchanting; but imagined that what English folk would be most enchanted with for the time being, not to say astonished, was the fine weather. They would not believe that fine weather was usual in England.

CHAPTER III.

The Convalescent—Shap Water—Persevering Guesses—What Shirts are for—The Lodgekeeper's Wife—Two Ways to Edenhall—The Way to the Giant's Caves—Young Cumbrians—Nine Kirks—The Caves—The Maiden's Step—Hugh's Parlour—Sir Lancelot du Lake—The Luck of Edenhall—The Duke's Ditty—The Fairies' Well—Sans Changer—The Ballad of the Luck.

Two hours later I had left Penrith, and was on the way to Edenhall, when a respectable-looking labourer, who had his best suit on, and carried a carpet-bag in his hand, touched my knapsack and accosted me with "So ye 're carryin' tea." Not tea! What was it then? Having pondered awhile, he tried again with "It 'll be patterns?" A Cumbrian of the old school, such as he seemed aged enough to be, should have used the old Cumbrian word for patterns—swatches. But he didn't; and his guess being wrong, he guessed again and again, as perseveringly as the Yankee did who tried to guess what it was had bitten the sailor's leg off. Meanwhile I questioned him, and his answer was that he had been a fortnight at Shap Wells, drinking the water and bathing, for the benefit of his health, and found that which he sought, and was now going to his home at Garrigill, a village near Alston. I congratulated him on the cure which enabled him, a sexagenarian, to undertake a walk of thirty miles burdened with a bag. "The water," he said, "tastes o'

gunpowder; but it does folk good; and Shap 's a place that suits a poor man's pocket."

Having guessed in vain, he begged me to tell him what I carried.

"Shirts."

He stood still in the middle of the road, and examined me curiously for a minute or two; shook his head, and asked, "And what d'ye carry shirts for?"

"To wear."

He took another look at me, and would perhaps have made some further demonstration, had we not come to a place where the road divided, and he turned to the left fork, I to the right. And so we parted. By the way, reader, you would hardly suspect that Garrigill is Cumbrian for Gerard's Gill.

About four miles from Penrith I came to the entrance to a park. The gate stood open, for the hay-makers were busy on the belt of grass left between the trees and the road on each side of the avenue. I passed through; but the lodge-keeper's wife intimated that I ought to take the road outside the park.

"Why?"

She hesitated a minute; then, "Oh, you see, people goes that way, and speaks to the butler."

"Do Sir George's visitors go that way, and speak to the butler?"

"No, visitors don't, but I think you had better."

To my reply that I preferred the avenue, she answered doubtfully, "Well, you know best; but her ladyship was very strong upon me not to let improper people go down this way to the hall."

I promised to bear the blame, should any ensue, and keeping on down the drive came at a bend in sight of the hall; not the Edenhall of the faithful Royalist

commended by Clarendon, but a spacious mansion built in the Italian style. As at Brougham, the front door stood confidingly open. I entered the hall: books, old watches and other antiques lay on a table in the centre; the door of the library was ajar; I peeped in, but saw no one, and heard not a sound; and felicitated myself on having come to a place where neighbours were not mistrusted. However, having discovered the bell, I presently found that after all I had to "speak to the butler," for not one of the family was at home; the ladies were out with the carriage; Sir George was taking a walk, but would be back to dinner at seven. I took off my knapsack, and made an opportunity of the interval to go and see the Giant's Caves. On my approach to the gate the lodge-keeperess met me with an apology; she had been talking about it to her husband, and hoped I wasn't offended. Of course not: I was only amused. "You see," she said, "Sir George's visitors always comes in a vehicle."

"And not," I interrupted, "with their baggage on their shoulders;" and then she cheerfully gave leave to her little son and daughter to show me the way to the Caves.

We crossed two or three fields and came upon the Eamont, about half a mile above its confluence with the Eden, where the bank rises high and precipitous and rough with rock and wood. The children with a little encouragement soon began to talk and tell me their version of the traditions, and proved themselves genuine young Cumbrians by commencing every reply with "Well," and pronouncing *o* as *aw*: their father's name they said was Jawzif. We could see St. Ninian's on a green level some distance up the valley, the church containing the vault of the Broughams; and that the

youngsters said was called Nine Kirks, because evil spirits pulled it down nine times o' nights when it was a-building. Then we descended by a steep path to a ledge in the red sandstone cliff, and along this ledge within a distance of about a hundred yards are the hollows or excavations known as the Giant's Caves. In one the children pointed out two rude faces carved in the rock, as the giant and his wife; in another a projecting block was the giant's bed; a little farther, and a gap in the ledge was the Maiden's Step, down which the giant fell and was drowned in the river while pursuing a lady who escaped by leaping across; for he was a very wicked giant that devoured cattle and men and women and children when he could catch them. The gap was a fearful place for the little ones, and yet they would like to look into it. But when I held out my hand to offer support they started back exclaiming, "Na, na!" However, they both ventured at last and peeped into the break which, though it proved a trap for the wicked giant, a man might easily stride across.

This is the place described by the old chronicler as Isey Parlis, now Isis Parlis, which may be, as is pretended, a corruption of Hugh's Parlour. One of the caves shows traces of having been formerly inclosed by a gate; and some antiquaries think that here was once a hermitage, or a hiding-place to which the people resorted during inroads of the Scots. Others surmise it to be the scene of Sir Lancelot du Lake's meeting with the "damsell faire," when

> "She brought him to a river side,
> And also to a tree,
> Whereon a copper basin hung,
> And many shields to see;"

and of his combat with the mighty knight Tarquin who never had been "matcht with any man," but who met with more than his match in Sir Lancelot, as the ballad says,

> "Forthwith he strucke his necke in two,
> And when he had soe done,
> From prison, threescore knights and four,
> Delivered everye one."

Apart from associations with giant, knight, or hermit, the place has romantic beauties of its own; red rocks overhung by masses of foliage, and a stream flowing actively beneath, which fail not of their charm. A place favourable alike to idle musing or thoughtful meditation.

"Come," said Sir George Musgrave, on my return to the Hall; "let me show you the *Luck* at once;" and opening a leathern case which he brought from his muniment room, he took out an ancient drinking-glass and placed it on the table.

Curiously did I scan the precious relic—the famous *Luck of Edenhall*—fearing to touch it until assured that its owner had no superstitious dread of seeing it in a stranger's hand. Imagine a tall tumbler, of old-fashioned glass, green and specky, expanding in easy curve from the bottom upwards, and terminating in a graceful lip, and enamelled with a geometrical design in crimson, blue, and yellow, and you see the *Luck* which has been in possession of the Musgraves for many generations. It has a threefold value: in the mysterious tradition which associates it with the fairies; in the sacred use to which in all probability it was once applied; and as a specimen of ancient art.

The leathern case is with good reason believed to be workmanship of the fifteenth century; it bears the monogram I. H. S. which identifies it with the church,

and we may believe the *Luck* to have been a chalice used for sacramental purposes, made at Venice perhaps in the tenth century. I was permitted to complete my examination of the *Luck* by drinking a draught of sherry from it; then restored to the case, it was locked up once more in its receptacle in the muniment room. The projection of the lip makes it somewhat inconvenient as a drinking-glass; yet Philip Duke of Wharton used to make merry with it, as we learn from his ballad, a parody on Chevy Chase:—

"God prosper long from being broke
The Luck of Edenhall:
A doleful drinking bout I sing,
That lately did befall.

To chase the spleen with cup and can
Duke Philip took his way;
Babes yet unborn shall never see
The like of such a day.

The stout and ever-thirsty Duke
A vow to God did make,
His pleasure within Cumberland
Three live-long nights to take.

Sir Musgrave too, of Martindale,
A true and worthy knight,
Eftsoon with him a bargain made
In drinking to delight.

Now when these merry tidings reach'd
The Earl of Harold's ears,
'And am I,' quoth he, with an oath,
'Thus slighted by my peers?'"

And so the ditty goes on for nearly two score stanzas, with the doings of the rivals, and the final triumph. The concluding stanza runs:—

"God bless the king, the duchess fat,
And keep the land in peace,
And grant that drunkenness henceforth
'Mong noblemen may cease."

It is said that the Duke delighted to toss up the Luck after his bumpers, and catch it as it fell. Luckily it never came to harm, and shows no sign whatever of the shivering as pictured in Uhland's ballad; or of the cracks and injuries mentioned in Longfellow's translation!

"Now for the Well," said Sir George, and he led the way to a corner of the pleasance where a crystal spring bubbles up into a small square stone basin, and flows away in a perennial stream along a channel in the smooth green turf. Here, according to tradition, the fairies were dancing and drinking one night when the butler coming to draw water, they started in alarm and prepared to fly; but having dropped their crystal beaker the man picked it up, and turning a deaf ear to the entreaties of the fays for restoration of their treasure, he brought it to his master, hearing plaintive voices say as he turned away,

> "If that cup shall break or fall,
> Farewell the Luck of Edenhall."

The spring is now known as St. Cuthbert's Well. A cavity in one of the stones enclosing the basin is said to be the place where the fairies kept their crystal vase; now a glass drinking-cup stands therein for the use of all who incline to take a draught of the sparkling water. I drank a bumper to the prosperity of Edenhall.

Next morning I quaffed a second bumper before the dew was dry, eager for all the quickening that water endowed by fairy and saint could impart. Then while strolling under stately beeches, or in sunshiny gardens, or along the upland glades of the park, my thought went roving among scraps of ballads and fragments of history. There was scope enough; for Musgrave is one of the names inscribed in the roll of Battle Abbey;

and the minstrel sings to us of a fatal fray, where a warrior cried—

> "I'd give the lands of Deloraine,
> Dark Musgrave were alive again."

Sir Christopher the fifth baronet married a daughter of that quaint old traveller, Sir John Chardin. Then there was Sir Philip, who raised eighteen hundred men for the king, exemplifying the motto of his house, *Sans Changer*, through trial and privations, and who at the Restoration was named Governor of Carlisle and Lord Lieutenant of Cumberland and Westmoreland, as is related by worthy Gilbert Burton, the vicar of the parish. In 1673, writes the simple-hearted divine, "This year S^{r}. Philip begun and finished a little oratory on y^{e} front of his house at Edenhall, for y^{e} public and family worship of God." I half wished the old house were yet standing.

But that fairy legend, it comes flitting through the mind as butterflies across a bosky alley, and imagination renews the scene. Rhymers and story-tellers have alike made the *Luck* their theme, and while one adheres to the ancient boteler, another brings a knight returning from the wars to seize the cup at the very moment that the elves are disporting in the moonlight. But there is yet another version, less known, perhaps, with which we may entertain ourselves here for a few minutes:

> "'Twas summer-tide, when days are long,
> And holm and haugh are green;
> And the mavis sings in the good greenwood,
> And chatters the jay between.
>
> 'O, whither dost run thou little foot-page,
> As swift as hawk on wing?'
> 'For life—for life, to Penrith town
> I run, the leech to bring!'

'And wherefore seekest thou the leech?
Now up, and tell to me.'
'O, hold me not, thou weird woman,
There's glamour in thine ee!'

Oh, there was glamour in her ee;
He could not choose but tell:
'My mistress lieth in deadly swoon,—
The ladye Isabel.'

'Now run, now run, thou little foot-page,
Run swift as hawk on wing;
But if the leech to succour fail,
Then seek the fairies' spring.'

The little foot-page hath gone and come,
So nimble of foot was he;
And his bonnie bright een were wet with tears,
For he loved his dear ladye.

The leech he rode to Edenhall,
The while uprose the moon:
But his craft was vain, and his simples naught,
To loose the deadly swoon.

The little foot-page, he wept full sore,
And he fell on his knee and he prayed:
He prayed a prayer to Mary Mother,
And Saint Cuthbert to aid.

His dear ladye hath nurtured him
Since rose his infant wail,
That night his father's hut was burnt
By thieves from Liddelsdale.

Then thought he of that weird woman,
But, oh! 'tis a fearsome thing
To go at night, in the wan moonlight,
And walk by the fairies' spring.

Yet will he forth, whate'er betide,
Yet will he forth and see;
For who loveth he on earth beside,
If not his dear ladye?

So softly crept he down the stair,
And out by the secret door;
And he was aware of a strange music
He never had heard before.

And slowly paced he o'er the mead,
And heard the self-same sound ;
And there he saw a companye
A-dancing round and round.

He fell on his knee behind a bush,
And his heart beat quick for fear,
Whenever he saw the dainty folk
Come dancing him a-near.

So beautiful their faces shone,
So bright their silken sheen ;
He could but dread to look thereon,
And yet he looked, I ween.

Oh, merrily did they laugh and dance,
Still tripping round and round ;
But not a blade of grass did bend,
No flower sunk on the ground.

And ever the music rang full sweet,
Yet sat no players there ;
It was as if the trees did sing,
While tinkled harps in air.

Anon they pause, and a crystal cup
Is dipped in the bubbling spring,
And gliding goes, from lip to lip,
All round the fairy ring.

And ever it dips and fills again,
And while the revellers drink
The brimming water falls like pearls
Down from the sparkling brink.

But the fay that bears that cup around
No mortal eye may see.
'Oh, could my lady drain that cup !'
Thought the little foot-page on knee.

Scarce had he thought than to him glides
The cup from the bubbling spring ;
Him paused before, yet who it bore
Did nought of shadow fling.

He trembled sore, but he took the cup,
For the sake of his dear ladye ;
And fast the drops fell down like pearls
As he rose up from knee.

And at his feet, upon the grass,
A written scroll was thrown ;
Then all at once the music ceased,
And the fairy folk were gone.

He took the scroll, and he took the cup,
Them to the hall he bore ;
The Lady Isabel did drink,
And her deadly swoon was o'er.

And the little foot-page he brought the scroll,
And showed it to his lord ;
Sir Ralph he looked thereon and read,
In olden style, the word—

'If that cuppe
Shal breake or falle,
Farewel the Lucke
Of Edenhalle.'

Sir Ralph de Musgrave made a feast,
For joy over his ladye ;
And the little foot-page he stood by her chair,
And blithest of all was he.

Sir Ralph de Musgrave built a church,
In sweet Saint Cuthbert's prayse,
That men might know whence came the Lucke,
And think thereon alwayes."

CHAPTER IV.

To see Long Meg—The Helm Wind—An English Bora—Blustrous Phenomena—Little Sakkel and Dick Whittington—Long Meg and her Maidens—Choice between unhallowed Dancers and Druids—The Lacy Caves—River Eden and Uther Pendragon—To Ulleswater—The Ladies' Walk—St. Cuthbert's Church—Longwathby—Hartside—A Statesman of the Old School—A Coo i' t' Mire—A Cattle Dentist—Brain-explorers—Old Homespun—How he rode to Market—How he manured his Fields—Clog-wheelers and Pack-horses—Magnificent Prospect—A bleak Hill-top—Poor above, Rich below—Reminiscence of a Snowstorm—Mountain Landscape—Alston—A Mining Town—Nent-force Level—Underground Boating—Fiends' Fell—Tyne and Tees—Yadmoss—The First Carriage—Unlucky Nobleman; Lucky Hospital—Curious Epitaph.

AFTER breakfast one of the keepers was bidden to "dandify" himself, and show me the way to a hilltop four miles distant, where stand Long Meg and her Maidens. We followed the Alston Road to Longwathby, a rustic village, with a spacious green and detachments of grazing geese; then along byeways to Little Salkeld, a pleasant hamlet on high ground, flanked by trees, and enlivened by a busy little mill on a pebbly brook. Here every furlong opened wider views of the Crossfell range and the vale of Eden, and it was cheering to see the strides made by cultivation on what a few years ago were regarded as irreclaimable wastes.

The sight of Crossfell reminds us of the "helm wind," a remarkable phenomenon, of which it is the scene, chiefly between September and May. Dwellers in the neighbourhood of the great hill see at times a

small but well-known cloud appear above the summit; it spreads rapidly, stretching for miles along the height, creeping below the brow, and, in local phrase, "the helm is on." This is the signal for the helm wind, which presently begins to blow, and increases in strength, until the country on the western side of the hill is swept by a furious and incessant blast. A stranger brought within its influence for the first time might perhaps anticipate a storm; but to his surprise the wind blows without pause or abatement for three, five, or ten days, roaring all the while like the tempestuous sea, and with a violence that overturns haystacks, uproots trees, blackens vegetation, and lays flat the growing crops. In fact, it is an English *Bora*.

The helm, or mass of cloud is of variable length, from four to sixteen miles, ranging north and south. It is clearly defined, and remains separate from other clouds. At the same time a second range forms parallel with it, equally distinct, and at a distance of from half-a-mile to four miles or more. This second range is known as "the bar," and it is only between the helm and the bar that the wind blows; hence, the breadth of country subject to the visitation depends on the varying space between the two cloud barriers. It is as if a vent were there established for some vast atmospheric accumulation, which rushes out, leaving undisturbed the stratum of cloud that may at times be seen motionless far above.

To produce this phenomenon there must be an easterly wind, and this, meeting with ground rising continually all the way from the North Sea, and impelled by some as yet unknown force, appears in the roaring blast on the west of the hill, at the same time a calm prevails on the eastern side. No rain falls where the

helm wind blows; but should heavy rains occur along the margin of its course, there is an almost immediate cessation of the blast.

Little Sakkel, as the natives call it, is in the parish of which Paley was pastor about the time he wrote his *Evidences*. And the same parish is said to have been the birthplace of Dick Whittington, and to the worthy knight is ascribed the building of Great Salkeld church. The three bells which he sent from London to be hung in the tower were stopped on the way at Kirkby Stephen, and there, if tradition be truthful, they still remain. Great Salkeld, not far off, was the birthplace of the Ellenborough who aided in the defence of Warren Hastings.

Above the hamlet, on a spot once bleak and wild, now covered by a farm, we came upon Long Meg and her Maidens; in other words, sixty-seven unhewn stones standing in a circle of three hundred and fifty feet diameter. There is no uniformity of size or quality; some are grit, some are limestone; some ten feet high, or as much in girth, others not more than two feet. Meg stands about thirty feet to the south of the circle, a mass of red sandstone, eighteen feet in height, overtopping all the rest.

Of course you will be told here, as at all similar monuments, of the difficulty, not to say impossibility of counting the stones; and you may choose between the legend of Long Meg and her Maidens turned to stone for holding an unhallowed dance, and the speculations of the antiquary over temples of the Druids.

Then we found a way down a broad deep gully, through tall rank grass, and amid thickly-growing oaks, to the brink of the Eden, near a red sandstone

bluff, in which are the Lacy Caves; so named from a resident in the neighbourhood, who undertook their excavation. You find arched passages receding into the darkness, and with an outlook from sundry openings upon the stream, admirable for their environment, if not for themselves. The river is broad and clear, makes a bend round the hill, tumbles with rush and roar over a stony mill dam, the bank is steep and wooded, a rill runs across with lively babble; and these make up a happy finish to a morning's walk.

We fell in with two of quaint old Izaak's fraternity; both in good humour because of the river's bounty. One was a Londoner, who, having chosen his headquarters at Longwathby, had been fishing up and down the stream for a fortnight, and was not yet weary of his meditative recreation or cheerful scenery. "Eden is full of fine trout fish," says the old chronicler above quoted; and where could an angler find a river more richly fraught with interesting associations. From its source in the hills of Yorkshire, through gloomy Mallerstang, and along all its windings across two counties to fall into the Solway, it still reminds us of the ancient rhyme—

> "Let Uther Pendragon do what he can,
> River Eden shall still run as it ran."

After lunch, a party was made up for a trip to Lowther Castle. Happening to say on the way thither that Ulleswater was the only one of the lakes which I had not seen, and that I preferred nature to art, the coachman was ordered to make for Pooley Bridge instead of Lowther, and we had a delightful drive along the margin of "Ulfo's Lake," following the route taken by De Vaux's messenger when speeding on

"fleetest courser" to Lyulph's Tower, there to hear from the hoary sage the wondrous tale of Arthur and Guendolen.

Three mornings did I wake within sight of the Fairies' Well, ready for whatever inspiration might ensue from a draught of the ever-flowing water, and with free range for the indulgence of every mood: indoors, amiable society; out-of-doors, flower-plots, and woods, and sunny glades, and a sequestered path—the Ladies' Walk—by the side of the Eden; broad slopes commanding distant views, and the little church dedicated to St. Cuthbert, standing within the park. The latter is an interesting specimen of a village church, having a fine curve of Norman ornament on the chancel arch; an east window, wherein are represented King Ceolwyn and the Saint; a carved pulpit and an oaken roof, and shields and tombs of the Musgraves and their kinsfolk. As we sat there in the chancel during the Sunday morning service, I could not help thinking once more of Sir Philip, who, as his biographer relates, "did wainscott and adorn wholly at his own charge the quire of the church at Edenhall, and gave several ornaments by way of thankfulness to God, for the many great mercies he had vouchsafed unto him, and because in that place he was baptized and made a member of the Catholic Church, and several of his ancestors buried, as also the body of his dear wife laid to rest within these walls."

On the third morning, that I might have no excuse for thinking I had lost my time in this hospitable mansion, a groom was sent to help me on with a drive; and so cheerfully did the horse trot the sixteen miles, that by nine o'clock I was in Alston, and ready to begin a day's walk. But though quick, the journey

was not barren. Beyond Longwathby the road rises upon the lower slopes of Hartside, and mounts higher and higher until, with frequent zigzags, it reaches the summit. I was surprised by the sight of fenced fields where, a few years ago, all was open heath. Your Cumbrian farmer of the old school—"a statesman"—would as soon have had a tooth drawn as drain his wet land, unless there happened to be a dangerous patch of bog; and he had no ambition to show himself wiser than his forefathers. It was better to suffer from damp and ague than to commit the wickedness of draining; and perhaps there was something that warmed the blood in the frequent cry on a boggy farm, "Run wi' t' reapes: a coo i' t' mire!" which translated out of Cumbrian into English means, "Run with the ropes: a cow in the mire;" an incident of frequent occurrence with "fendy" cattle, that is, frisky. But when improvement did begin it was not languid, and up to the year of the Great Exhibition the county had already used nearly 300,000,000 draining tiles. And another proof of progress appears in the fact that Cumbrian farmers maintain a cattle-dentist, and with manifest advantage to the health of their kine. And some among them have surprising skill in treating sheep afflicted with the staggers. This disease is caused by the presence of a hydatid, the *Tœnia Cœnurus*, in the brain: the skull becomes soft over the spot where the intruder lodges; and then the farmer taking his knife, cuts out a disk of the softened bone, and inserting a roughened quill into the brain, draws forth the cruel enemy, replaces the bone, and binds up the wound. I saw some sheep with their heads in bandages, which had been thus treated; and had a talk with a young farmer who told me that most of his cases survived

the operation. What will Doctor Sharpey say to this?

Old Homespun was content to live in a "clay-dauby;" a cottage built to the height of a man, and then roofed. The saddle on which he rode to market was a fresh-cut turf, with girth and stirrups of twisted straw; and it sometimes happened that while he was driving bargains, or drinking with his neighbours, the horse ate up the girth and stirrups. His cart was a "clog-wheel car," a little clumsy vehicle scarcely larger than a stout navvy's wheelbarrow, with wheels of thick solid plank, fixed to a thick wooden axle, and wheels and axle all turned together. This cart could not be used in farm-work: Old Homespun carried manure to the fields in creels or panniers, he sitting behind them on the horse's back, to pull out the pegs which released the bottom of the creel and discharged the load; and if he chanced to draw one peg before the other, then the full creel swinging round pulled him from his seat. He remembers hearing his father talk of the days when everybody ate porridge and oat-bread; and a wheaten loaf could not be bought in all Carlisle; and you might as well expect to see rice growing in Cumberland as wheat. All of which seems to us, in these days, the natural consequence of preferring thieving and fighting to honest and peaceful tillage. And the old habits proved stubborn: pack-horses did not disappear from the neighbourhood of Whitehaven till 1830; and since then I remember to have seen clog-wheel cars in the market-places of Kendal and Penrith, and long trains of packhorses in the valley of the Tyne.

Hartside is 1300 feet high, and must have been a formidable ascent when there was none but a

rough winding track, bestrewn with big stones. Now, as in all parts of the Alston district, the road is excellent. This hill, as before mentioned, is part of the Crossfell range, the Penine Alps, or backbone of England, as geologists call it, which stretches from Northumberland into Derbyshire. With increasing elevation we left behind the fields and the warm temperature; and it became so cold, that I was glad to walk up the last zigzags and some distance across the top, not only for the view, but for exercise also. The view is indeed magnificent, across the vale of Eden, and away to the mountains of the Lake country. League after league had opened before us as we ascended; fields, woods, pastures, and hedgerows, farms and villages, rejoicing in the morning sun; the green looking greener by contrast with swarthy patches of moorland, until the great panorama lay unrolled beneath us, and Skiddaw and Saddleback, with their purple-robed brethren, rose full in the west. A misty gleam, which brightens as the sun grows higher, marks the place of Ulleswater; and it is said that, in very clear weather Carlisle and the Solway, backed by far distant hills in Scotland, can be seen. But we saw them not, because of a haze in the north-west. There was, however, enough unveiled, and more than enough, to make me feel that for grandeur and beauty few mountain views will compare with the prospect from Hartside. It is, besides, easy of access, and no guide is required for the turnpike road.

Significant are the names of the villages within sight, many of them terminating in *by*, suggestive still of their Scandinavian origin; of resolute colonists from Norway and Denmark scattered here over the country.

The effect of the distance is perhaps heightened by

what is near. The summit of the hill itself is bleak and dreary, rough with ling and big stones, heaved up into the zone where Nature's face is severe and often frowning. Camden, writing of Cumberland, says, "Pass to the east of it, a lean, hungry, desolate sort of a country, which affords nothing remarkable besides the head of South Tine in a wet spongy ground, and ancient Roman cawsey." And this rugged region is the meeting-place of the five northernmost counties; here, amid wild solitudes, they touch one another, and seemingly forbid intrusion. But the riches which other regions display on the surface, here lie underground; and Industry, regardless of cheerless landscapes and toil and privation, has taken possession, and burrowing underground with pick and gad, has found and still finds mineral treasures apparently inexhaustible. We —that is, you and I, good-natured reader—saw one edge of this region that day we walked from High Force to the top of Mickle Fell; here, to-day, we see another edge, and if we imagine an area of such scenery twenty miles each way, we shall know what are the aspect and extent of this northern mining district, comprising four hundred square miles.

To me the passage of the hill was rendered yet more interesting by a reminiscence of former days. In that same winter to which allusion has already been made, I started one morning to walk from Longwathby to Alston. The hostess of the little public-house told me there was a storm on the hills; but the weather was fine below, and the thought of a storm suggested nothing terrible to my inexperience. Half way up I came to thin, scattered snow. That was nothing. But thence every step was among snow falling faster and lying thicker; and presently I rose into the line

of a wind that blew with pitiless fury, making the snow whirl in blinding eddies. The zigzags bothered me by their frequent change of direction; but turn which way I would, it made no difference; the snow would drive into my face. In some places the drifts lay already three feet thick, and the walking became laborious. Yet I could not give myself leave to go back. On the top there was a lull for perhaps a minute: and I looked round with wonder on the white landscape, and began to feel somewhat intimidated by the silence and utter solitude. Not a soul had I met, and nothing could I see but snow and rocks; however, I trudged forward, hoping the worst was over. But ere I came to the brow of the eastern descent, the storm, as if to make up for lost time, rushed forth once more, and with such a torment of sleet and snow, and howling blasts, as to bewilder me so completely, that for a while I could do nothing but stand in a vain endeavour to discover to which quarter to turn my back. Vain, indeed, for all were alike cruel. There was nothing for it but a struggle. For some time I hardly knew which way to struggle, as everything was hidden beyond a few yards. At length the dip of the road became apparent, and I struggled on, but less bravely than before. I had no overcoat, and the cold began to tell upon me, and more than once I was on the point of yielding to mental torpor, and the almost irresistible desire to sit down. Perhaps, I should have yielded at last, had not a timely rift in the driving snow revealed to me a habitation about half a mile a-head. It was a turnpike; and right glad was I to take shelter under the friendly roof.

Very different is this wild hill-country in summer: though bleak and barren it then shows whatever it has

of beauty to the sunshine; and there is beauty in the wide rolling expanse, in the great brown heathy slopes here and there broken by rocks and screes, and grouped in varying outline where they plunge upon the valleys. The eye roving afar detects alternations of colour; perceives an almost forest-like effect in the shadows of clouds, and rests fondly on the patches of green which denote the outburst of a spring, or the bestowal of culture.

Alston is such a town as you would expect to see in such a country, hilly, irregular, and shabby. Below it flows the Tyne, a shallow mountain river, in a bed filled with big stones, receiving as it passes the Nent, a little stream that rushes down from the eastern hills. The principal street is so steep that you will pant again while on the way through the market-place to the upper part of the town, and perhaps incline to stop and look at the queer hard-featured houses and the curious shops, among which there is a good display of mining gear and implements. Truly just such a town as you would expect to see, which has long been the isolated metropolis of the mining region, which for want of good roads was difficult of access until 1828, when by the aid of MacAdam, the road-maker, and a stage coach, the town was brought into daily communication with Penrith and Newcastle. Now, by a branch line to Haltwhistle, it connects with the Newcastle and Carlisle railway.

But it is not a poor town; it has 20,000*l.* in the Savings Bank, has a few good houses, pays some attention to drainage and water supply, and has built a bright new townhall in mediæval style, with clock-tower, pinnacles, and lightsome gables, and established therein a newsroom and the offices of the bank.

Though the heights are bare, there are trees and gardens on the lower slopes and in the bottom of the valley; and the Nent, just before it falls into the Tyne, forms a cascade down a rocky dell which, notwithstanding the presence of a spinnery, has some touches of the romantic. On one side in the precipitous crag appears the entrance to the Nentforce level, a great drift nine feet in height and width, hewn more than three miles through the hills, in search of lead veins, and now used to drain off water from the mines; and when you see the outflow as of a small river, and peer into the darkness of the arch, your notion of the magnitude of mining operations will perhaps be enlarged. It is navigable by flat boats; and parties well provided with candles sometimes venture in for a mile or two, leaving here and there a light burning on ledges of the rock, whereby a surprising effect is produced when viewed from a distance; at the same time the several strata may be viewed and the metallic veins exposed by the excavation. Having once voyaged along a water level deep down in the Peak of Derbyshire, I had no desire to repeat the adventure in Cumberland.

To one with time to spare, Alston is a good centre for excursions. An angler trying the streams would be rewarded by the sight of waterfalls as well as by fish. A stout walk up the Tyne brings you to its source and the summit of Crossfell, Fiends' Fell as it was called till St. Augustine and his missionaries drove away the demons and erected a Cross thereon. About a mile from the source Tees may be seen, already a little river, flowing in the opposite direction. The miners on the Tyne, not having water enough for their purposes, once cut a channel to feed their own stream with water from

the Tees. Near by is Yadmoss where, by flinging down brushwood on the spongy soil, the Scottish army escaped from Weardale and Edward the Third; and where no carriage ever passed until 1824, when Lord Lowther travelled that way from Alston into Teesdale. Then, following the Tyne downwards, you come to pleasing scenery enlivened by woods, and to Whitley Castle; a Roman station on the left bank, of which the breastworks and ditches are still distinctly traceable, where altars, inscribed tablets, and fragments of sculpture have been dug up. The Maiden Way touches the station in its course from Brough to Carvorran on the Roman wall. And in addition to hills, falls, and antiquities there are caverns in the limestone, offering subterraneous exploration within a morning's walk.

Alston Moor is a name well known to all who traffic in lead. It is a manor comprehending about forty-five square miles. Once held by the Veteriponts (Viponts) it descended to the Ratcliffes, Earls of Derwentwater, and was forfeited by him who lost his head for taking part with the Pretender in 1715. Subsequently, it was made over with other estates that had belonged to the unfortunate nobleman, to the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital, who now derive a princely revenue from their northern possessions. The bell in the church here, recast some years ago, was brought from Dilstone Castle, a residence of the Derwentwaters, seated high in the fairest part of the vale of Tyne. In the churchyard a curious epitaph nearly a hundred years old perpetuates a cobbler's memory:—

"My cutting-board's to pieces split,
My size-stick will no measures mete,
My rotten last's turn'd into holes,
My blunted knife cuts no more soles,

My hammer's head's flown from the haft,
No more Saint Mondays with the craft;
My nippers, pincers, stirrup, and rag,
And all my kit have got the bag,
My lapstone's broke, my colour's o'er,
My gum-glass froze, my paste's no more,
My heels sew'd on, my pegs are driven,—
I hope I'm on the road to heaven!"

CHAPTER V.

Nent Valley—Geological Phenomena—Nent Head—Lead Works—A Busy Scene—Furnaces and Pigs—Seven Miles under-ground—Clogs and Children—Bouse and Bouse-teams—Washing, Buddling, and Hotching—Slime Pits—Clever Separation—Wise or not—Morals among Miners—Not so bad as it seems—An Ill-word about Coal-mines—Ugly Facts—Kilhope Law—A long Chimney—Coalcleugh—R and H, a Case of Exasperation—Up for Hope—Carshield—Mr. Beaumont's Territory—The Pay-office—Hartleycleugh—Snow-poles—Longer Chimneys—Allentown—Reckoning without the Hosts—A Traveller in a fix—A Cheerful Reception—Catton—Langley Castle—Haydon Bridge—Another Cheerful Reception—What Roger North says—Hanging in the Good Old Times.

WISHING to see something of the mines and miners, I turned away from the Tyne, and was presently on the hill-top above the town, walking up the valley of the Nent, but at a considerable elevation above the stream; high enough to scan a great expanse of rolling summits, among which not a few mark the border of Northumberland. Now and then a heavy shower swept across, making the intervening sunshine appear the brighter, and freshening up the verdure of the fields and meads that lie in the hollows, and producing a variety of light and shade upon the landscape wherein the little sykes or gullies that furrow the hill sides appear the darker.

We are here on the apex of the island, among the topmost upheavals of the limestone, sandstone, and slate: strata which are the joy of the miner, for therein he finds rich veins and pockets of metal. Not without

tremendous throes were they uplifted to their present elevation; and here and there in a scar, or on the rugged flank of a watercourse, we may read somewhat of their history. In some places the metallic veins lay open to the daylight; and on one side of a valley the ends of rock-beds are seen corresponding to similar beds on the other side; and with other remarkable phenomena the limestone slopes away on the east and the west till it meets the coal strata, which in this latitude complete the slope and rush down beneath the sea on both sides of the island.

We pass Nent Hall, which, embosomed in trees, reminds us of an oasis, and, four miles from Alston, come to the village of Nent Head, which makes no secret of its vocation, for huge mounds of refuse, tramways, wagons, heaps of ore, implements scattered about, and a sturdy population proclaim that it lives by the mines. It belongs to the London Lead Company, who rebuilt it some years ago; hence it boasts a market-house crowned by a clock-tower, a Methodist chapel, and a good school-house, yet somewhat primitive withal. And is it not right that a village should harmonise with its environment? There are however no signs of poverty, but abundant signs of work; men and boys washing, sorting, and crushing ore, amid the splashing of water, the thumping of machinery, and clattering as of falling stones when the wagons from the mines drop their burden. From the heaps of ore at one end of the premises, to the slime-pits on the other, resolute industry prevails.

Higher up the hill stands the smelt-mill, where the ore is roasted and melted and cast into pigs of lead. The roasting is what a metallurgist calls a beautiful process: the ore is spread on the sole, or floor of a

furnace, and is heated to a temperature at which it parts with its sulphur and takes up oxygen, but does not melt. In another furnace it is melted, and you see the molten stream flowing from the mouth into a pot. In another, the stubborn slag, or the dross and refuse, is treated by a roaring blast, becomes docile, yields every particle of lead, while splendid blue and green flames leap and play in the impetuous current. You see how even the sweepings of the chimney are converted into metal by the action of fire; how silver is separated from the baser metal; and not least astonishing among strange sights is the huge water-wheel, exceeding in circumference perhaps all that you have ever seen before, which drives the condensing apparatus.

The village is built on a hill slope, and here and there you see the galleries, or entrances to the mines, which penetrate the hills for miles, ramifying and honeycombing to such a depth that they reach the diggings from the other side, and, as I was told, it is possible to go all through seven miles underground, and come out in Weardale. One of the entrances was pointed out to me as Rampgill vein, from which seventy-two tons of ore have been dug every week for more than a hundred years. With such abundance as that to work upon, the 1200 men and boys may well be busy.

What a clattering of clogs there was when the school broke up, and the children swarmed out upon the street! They are not remarkable for beauty, but they are remarkable for cleanliness, and appear to be robust alike in heath and limb.

Let us take a walk through the works, and see by what process lead is produced, The ore as it comes

from the mines is in rough stony lumps, of all sizes, from the bigness of your head down to sand; some lumps are slaty in appearance, some like quartz; many are good specimens of the pale gray limestone from which they were torn, and the more they all sparkle with crystals of lead the better is their quality. Some look as if they were all lead, only brighter, so cunningly is the earth masked, and these, which are singularly heavy, the miners lovingly call "lazy lumps." The local term for ore is bouse; the wagons laden therewith run from the mines to the works, where each drops its burden into the bouse-teams; that is, into a range of open stalls, according to quality. Here the ore lies ready to hand; the washing-floors are close by on the same level, and the next operation is to break it up, wash it, and separate metal from stone.

A barrowful of ore is thrown on an iron grating upon which a stream of water is let to flow: the light earthy and gritty particles are thereby washed off, and carried into the "trunk-box" placed in connection with the grating. Meanwhile men and boys stand by with hammers, and pick the washed lumps. That which is only stone is at once thrown away; the metallic lumps are broken and sorted, and as much of the stone got rid of as possible, in readiness for the succeeding operations known on the spot as "buddling" and "hotching," which may be described as a kind of sifting with sieves suspended in water; an arrangement which facilitates the separation of the heavy from the light portions. You have only to agitate sieves and boxes with sufficient perseverance, and the ore will find its way to the bottom, and lie there as a distinct stratum, by its own gravity, and then separation from the refuse is easy.

It is a pretty sight to see a heap of pure ore lying all bright and glistening, ready for the smelt-mill; such a mass of what metallurgists call galena, you never saw before, and you may well admire it. The sight is one to admire, for its own intrinsic quality, and for the successful result of mechanical operations. Who would think that those great rough heaps of bouse could ever be brought into so clean a condition?

Nothing is lost. The washings are not allowed to run away to waste, but are intercepted and made to surrender whatever they hold of metalliferous. The trunk boxes are emptied from time to time, and the small lumps of ore picked out; in fact, whatever cunning and skill can do to save lead, is done. All the water of the washings before its final exit from the premises, is made to flow into "slime pits," where it remains for a time almost stagnant, until it has thrown down the light particles held in suspension. These particles form thick beds of "slime," in which is contained a considerable quantity of lead. But how to separate it?—that is the question.

Clever folk, these lead-seekers! you will say, on seeing the answer. With two rollers, and an endless web of canvas, they form an inclined plane; the web is set in motion, travelling, so to speak, up hill, and while it moves the slime drops upon it from a trough: water falls at the same time in a brisk shower, and the result is, that as the web moves, the particles of lead by reason of their weight fall into a trough, while the fine sand and mud is washed away; and then in a muddy stream the water is dismissed. Even the lead-seekers have done with it.

Now comes another question. Are they wise as well as clever? There is a good school here. The

appearance and arrangements of the place show that the London Lead Company like order and economy, and not huggermugger. Look in the faces of the people, you see no sign of want or privation. Look into the cottages, and you will see the appliances of substantial comfort; and to Nent Head belongs part of the 20,000*l.* in the Savings Bank at Alston. You will not hear of actions for divorce, or of the criminal causes whence such actions proceed; but you will hear of one offence against good morals, and that is, bastardy. If there were such an instrument as a moralometer, you would find bastardy to be a pretty steady high reading in the mining districts. We must not, however, suffer ourselves to be misled, though we may be surprised by such a state of things. It does not necessarily follow that there is more wickedness in these villages than in towns, which, by comparison, show a smaller return of illegitimate births: and the same argument applies to the rural districts in Scotland, against which the charge of immorality has been brought. For here, in this lead-mining country, a girl does not lose caste by having borne a child out of wedlock; though trouble may be occasioned at first, she continues to live on in her father's house, sharing still in the privileges of home, and is not despised by her mother and sisters. Neither is her chance of marriage diminished, though not as a matter of course with her first lover; and once married, she becomes a faithful wife, and as mother of a hardworking family is there to participate in all the ameliorating influences which time and circumstance may bring. But should she play the wanton, and repeat the offence, then she forfeits her position and prospect of matrimony.

Here in Nent Head, as I am told, the Company require

that the father of the child shall marry the woman whom he has, so to speak, betrayed; or quit their service.

Looked at fairly, we thus see that this hill-country has, after all, a good notion of morality. We may not, perhaps, hear of bastardy in the Haymarket; but who will contend that the Haymarket is more moral than Nent Head? Is there not among these miners' wives and daughters a manifestation—"inarticulate," if you will—of the charity that hopeth all things? It seems to me that women in other parts of the kingdom, even in places that regard themselves as refined and highly civilised, might learn a lesson from the unrefined. How many a virtuous woman has been made vicious by the cold scorn and neglect of her chaste, and it may be, untempted sisters!

The miners are, for the most part, sober and industrious; there appears to be something in their metalliferous employment which makes them, as a class, more respectable than coal-miners. Go down to the Durham coal-field, visit and observe the mining villages, and you will hear of coarse indulgences and brutal propensities that shock every sense of propriety, and make you shudder for human nature. Fornication is rife, and worse—incest, and to such an extent as to have passed into a by-word among the miners themselves; and it is worthy of remark, that this depravity prevails most in the mines most neglected by the proprietors; where tommy-shops demonstrate to the men the indifference or cupidity of their masters. Contrasted with that unhappy region, the lead-mining districts stand out in bright relief: and the bishop of Durham might well envy his brother of Carlisle, in whose diocese only two cases of incest could be heard of on diligent inquiry.

These are ugly facts; but they are facts of our native land, as much as ivy-clad ruins or glorious battle-fields. And however much we may deplore their existence, it is better to recognise the evil, and take thought for its removal, than to shut our eyes, and hope it is not true, and travel onward to sylvan landscapes. There the blemishes are; and shall we, inheritors of all our country's fame, take no pains to wipe them out?

Steep and stony is the ascent by which I left Nent Head, up the flank of Kilhope Law, a hill more than 2000 feet high. When viewed from above there is something picturesque after all in the aspect of the village: a cluster of solid white-washed houses, with pale blue slate roofs. But very lonely does it appear amid the great brown fells. From the smelt-mill a long range of masonry stretches away far up the hill-side, with low towers at intervals, as if in imitation of the Great Wall of China. You might guess it to be an aqueduct; but it is the chimney of the mill, and you see that it terminates above in an upright smoking-shaft. A chimney a mile long: what can that be for? The answer is, that smelters being wise in their generation, conduct the fumes from all their furnaces into one chimney, where in their long course to the vent the light particles have time to form a solid deposit on the walls, leaving only a small quantity of light vapour to escape. And this deposit, sometimes two feet thick, is dug out and scraped off once a year, and converted in the furnace into solid marketable lead.

We are now in Northumberland, and presently a rapid descent brings us down to Coalcleugh; a few cottages in a deep valley, through which flows a rapid

stream: a torrent rather; for under the bridge the bed is paved to avert the mischief of freshets. If Nent Head looked lonely, this mountain hamlet, with its wayside spring, its stacks of peat, its potato plots, and sheds built of stone, much more so. A crippled miner, who sat basking in the sun, said that he and his neighbours ate mostly oat-bread, and that he was glad rain had come, for "the country stood a vast in need on't."

Already the burr is apparent. From the Tyne to the Tweed you must make up your mind to hear the *r* as a guttural. And how a Northumbrian exasperates the *h*, bringing it up hoarsely from the very bottom of his chest! At times I could hardly recognise my own name exploded from a Northumbrian throat. And yet in many a proper name the *h* disappears: Kilhope is pronounced Killup; Rookhope is Rookup; and the same, farther north, where Chattlehope is Chattleup; and there you would have to ask for Dandie Dinmont's farm as Charlie's-up. Weardale is Weardle.

Farther on we come to Carshield in the valley of the West Allen, and not without hearing from more than one person on the way, that Mr. Beaumont, the member for the southern division of the county, is king of all the land hereabouts; and more, for you may start hence and walk forty-two miles on his territory without doubling on your steps. Here, by the roadside stands a Pay Office, a large room in which I saw a good supply of newspapers and a big drum. The miners assemble here "yance a month" to be paid; and here they meet the agent, and make their "bargains." One man with whom I walked a mile told me he had just taken "a bargain at forty-five shillings a bing:" in other words, had agreed to dig

out ore on those terms for three months, when the bargain would expire. Two bings and a half go to the ton! 'Twas hard work, he said; and the worst of it was, that the bargains mostly turned out better for the master than the man. If 'twasn't for the club in which they could provide for old age, he didn't know what was to become of 'em.

At Hartleycleugh toll-bar the road rises once more, and we leave the few trees and the patches of cultivation that adorn the lowest part of the valley, for the bare wild fells: higher and higher, till for the third time to day we come to a range of tall poles by the roadside, telling mutely of deep winter snows. Ere long the summit becomes, as is not uncommon among Northumbrian hills, a dismal peat bog, and the curlew flies round us with mournful cry. The great green hills on the eastern side of the vale, appear delightful by contrast. The view extends for miles around, and far in the north we can see the blue heights of Simonside which look into Coquetdale.

On the left rise two massive shafts, faintly smoking, the tops of the chimneys of Allendale smelt-mill. A little farther, and we see Allendale town, two miles distant in a valley on the right, and beyond that stands the mill: hence we form a surprising notion of the length of Northumbrian chimneys. By and by, the sight of hedgerows and groves of ash and fir, and a path through a pretty dingle make us aware that we have descended into the region of smiles.

Allentown, as we may call it, stands on the East Allen; a rustic-looking place, with somewhat of the bare aspect of a settlement, occasioned, perhaps, by the wide open space that separates its two lines of houses. This space was thinly strewn with what looked like

seaside shingle—stones of the bigness of turkey-eggs —which seemed to me a very primitive way of paving a market-place; or sowing a green, and I thought to myself that in such an unambitious town a traveller would be a prize.

But I was mistaken: The landlady of the *King's Head* had not a bed to spare; at least, she said she hadn't, though I did not believe her, and advised me to go next door. Thither I went. Mine host of the *Golden Lion*, who stood drowsily against his door-post, was very sorry; would let me have a room and welcome, but every room was engaged. I walked across the shingle to a public-house: no, the master and mistress had gone to Stagshaw Bank fair, and their representative would not be convinced that their absence made the more room for me. I recrossed the shingle to another public-house; same result; then to two others, but they were all churls alike, and appeared to consider the entertainment of travellers the very last part of their duty.

"Can you tell me where an honest man can find a bed?" I said to a policeman whom I met. He named all the houses one after another which had refused me, and that was all he could do to help me.

On further inquiry I heard of a Mary Teasdale who took in lodgers. She, however, had given up taking in lodgers just the week before.

What did it mean? I wondered. Is a man with a knapsack on his shoulder taken for a rogue here in Northumberland? Perhaps it is a case for which the doctor can prescribe.

I knocked at a door which bore the doctor's name on a brass-plate. It was opened by the assistant. I stated my case, and mentioned that I had credentials,

in the shape of a letter from a gentleman who may be described as Viceroy of Allendale. But the case was beyond the reach of medicine. It was very strange: and the adviser declaring himself unable to advise, made a bow, and shut the door.

My day's walking amounted to about fifteen miles. I wished to stay in Allentown in order to see the smelt-mill on the following morning; but now the chances seemed in favour of my having to walk to Haydon Bridge, seven miles farther, to find quarters. My letter was addressed to the manager of the mill, and I could call on him on the way.

He was at home, taking tea after the labours of the day, and looked, as I thought, doubtfully at the letter, and said, "Ay; ye'll come and see the mill in the morning."

I told him of the cheerful reception I had met with at Allentown. "Ay; they're cautious folk up there," he replied, and advised me to go to the public-house at Thorney Gate and mention his name, and I should be sure to get a bed.

To which, warned by my experience of Northumbrian hospitality, I answered, "Suppose I don't?"

"Then ye had best gang on to Catton, ye'll be sure to get a bed at one of the public-houses there."

"Suppose I don't? My belief is, that I shall have to go on to Haydon Bridge."

"Well, ye 'll come and see the mill in the morning."

"Good evening to you," I rejoined; "if I sleep to night at Haydon Bridge, you won't catch me back in this inhospitable country in the morning."

Descending the hill, I came presently to the mill and the great arch which carries the chimney across the road on its way to the wild fell where we passed

the topmost ends some two hours since; and when I saw the extent of the mill and the numerous piles of pigs of lead by the road side, I found it easy to believe that the Allendale mines yield one seventh of all the lead produced in the kingdom.

My foreboding was verified. Thorney Gate wouldn't. And at Catton, about a mile farther, the *Hare and Hounds* wouldn't, the *Unicorn* wouldn't, the *Licensed to sell* couldn't; and were all as inexorable as Allentown; had I asked them to lend me a ten pound note, they could hardly have been more surprised than they were by a request for a bed. So it is not always true that you can get what you want with money.

After passing Langley smelt-mills—a large irregular group of buildings, and chimneys, and rubbish, on the slope of a hill—the road leaves the bleak-looking fields and descends into a thickly wooded valley, where, on one side you have the ruin of Langley Castle, while on the other the noise of running water accompanies you down to the vale of Tyne.

Haydon Bridge is a small town on the Newcastle and Carlisle railway, and ought not, therefore, to be unreasonably shy of strangers; but the old lady who sat in the bar of the *Anchor* said she "could na' put me up."

"What!" I replied, "is it all over this blessed Northumberland alike? Do you take travellers for moss-troopers?"

"Na; but the master and mistress had gone to Stagshaw Bank fair."

"What of that; they surely haven't taken the beds with them. You must be daft to give me such an answer as that."

"Na mair daft than ye are," retorted grandam.

I cut short the altercation by declaring that whichever might be daft, I should stay all night; and I made myself comfortable on a couple of chairs in the parlour. Presently a waitress came in and took a look at me, and made a very stiff reply to my order for tea. But I suppose her report was favourable; for soon after she brought in the tray, and told me I could have a bed.

Northumberland only began to be civilised about the reign of George III., and it appears from my experience that the county has yet something to learn. How do horses fare if my treatment is "good entertainment" for a man?

What it was in the uncivilised times may be read in many a page of turbulent history. To go no farther back than the days of Roger North, we find a state of things which by contrast throws the good new times up into favourable relief. We will let Roger speak in his own words:—

"The County of Northumberland," he says, "hath been exceedingly infested with thieving of Cattle, which is the Remains of the Border Trade, since the Union with Scotland, after the Way used, in Time of Peace, before. For as, in Italy, the Murderer, running into the next Territory, was safe: so here they stole on either Side; and the other, under a different Jurisdiction, was an Asylum. This was so great a Mischief that all the considerable Farm Houses (the Houses of Gentlemen were Castles of course,) were built of stone in the manner of a Square Tower, with an overhanging Battlement, and, underneath the Cattle were lodged every Night. In the upper Room the Family lodged; and when the Alarm came, they went up to the Top, and, with hot Water and Stones from the Battlement,

fought in defence of their Cattle. The advantage of the Union was so great to these Countries, that the Lord Grey, of Wark's Estate, which, before, was not above 1000*l.* per Annum, hath since risen to 7000*l.* or 8000*l.*, which is at least a sixfold improvement. After the Union, to prevent this thieving Trade, the Crown sent Commissioners of Oyer and Terminer, directed to an equal Number of English and Scotch, extending to certain Limits on each Side of the Border; and, being continued, it is therefore called the Border Commission. And these meet in their Sessions, and hang up at another Rate than the Assises; for we were told that, at one Sessions, they hanged Eighteen for not reading *sicut Clerici.*"

"This hath made a considerable Reform," continues Roger, but the reform was accompanied by excessively sharp practice. "A violent suspicion" in these latitudes "was next to Conviction;" and he relates how that the Lord Keeper having a man brought before him on four indictments, one of which was stealing a horse from some person unknown, the only evidence being that the horse was seen grazing on the moors near the man's shiel, and no one knew who was the owner, refused to convict on such testimony. "In short, the Man escaped, much to the Regret of divers Gentlemen, who thought he deserved to be hanged; and that was enough. While the Judge, at the Trial, discoursed of the Evidence and its Defects, a Scotch Gentleman upon the Bench, who was a Border Commissioner, made a long Neck towards the Judge, and 'My Laird,' said he, 'send him to huzz, and yees neer see him mere.'"

CHAPTER VI.

The Cheerful Reception explained—The Vale of Tyne—A Happy Cottager—The Burr—The Northumbrian Shibboleth—Concerning Hotspur—Confluence of North and South Tyne—Pleasing Views—Hexham—Market-folk—The Moot-Hall—The Abbey Church—Prospect from the Tower—The Battlefield—The Seal and the Crypt—Dilstone Castle—A Teetotal Festival—What the Fruit-woman said—The Devil Water—The Bonny Lord—The Last Derwentwater—Corbridge—A Peel—What the Lord Keeper saw—Early Whisky—A Scrap from Akenside—Bywell, a Pretty Village—Mickley—Ovingham—Burial Place of the Bewicks—Cherryburn—A Talk in the Churchyard—The Ferry—Prudhoe Castle—Barons and Wolves—Scots and Appletrees—An Invitation—A Coke-burner's Cottage—His Domestic Economy—Wylam—The first Railways—A Pitman's Village—About Pilgrimage—Geordie Stephenson's Birthplace—A Fussy Engine—Stone-crushers—Newburn—Riverside Population—The Keel-row—Scraps of Song—Metropolis of Coal.

THREE commercial travellers who arrived by the early train next morning, were much amused by the account I gave them of my adventures over our breakfast, and as much surprised. What did it mean? They could not understand. One who was going up to Allentown said there was always room enough for a score of travellers at the *King's Head;* another was quite sure that the *Anchor's* beds had not all been filled. What did it mean? The third said he could not see anything suspicious in my appearance, and we none of us could tell what it meant.

I have since heard the explanation: I was taken for a Sapper, at least in Allentown. Her Majesty's corps of Engineers, as is well known, are engaged in the

Ordnance Survey of Northumberland; and the men have won a reputation for gallantry as well as trigonometry, and here and there an increase of population takes place in a way not recognised as lawful by the Registrar-General.

Admitting this explanation, it does not say much for Northumbrian discernment that a quiet-looking individual, not in uniform, should have been taken for a wearer of the epaulettes, and treated accordingly.

The garden of the *Anchor* looks into the Tyne, and across to the railway station on the left bank; and if you stand on the bridge and look up and down the stream, you see a smiling vale beautified by cultivation and foliage; no longer the wild slopes of rock and heath as we saw at Alston. And the river itself, broader and deeper than in the hills, flows along its stony bed, rippling cheerfully in reply to the salutations of the leaves.

Along this smiling vale runs the road to Hexham, now low among trees, now high over the shoulder of a hill, whence you get pleasing views of the river. The smoke of a lime-kiln and the chimney of a paper-mill on the farther bank seem to be ominous of a change; but happily we are more than a day's walk from the edge of the smoky region. About four miles on the way I turned into a lane, and with the usual result; finding that however pleasant a high-road may be, lanes are always pleasanter. In the lanes we are in closer companionship with Nature. I came to a couple of cottages tenanted by farm-labourers; and could not help admiring the well-stocked garden, where gooseberries hung in thousands on the bushes. One of the men having an "off-day" was at home nursing the baby, while the wife had gone to market at Hexham;

and he invited me to take a turn round the garden, of which half belonged to each cottage. The abundance betokened industry and no small amount of comfort. There were currants, rhubarb, cabbage, carrots, potatoes, peas; and flowers at the end where they could be best seen from the windows. I congratulated the man on his lot, and he answered that he had nothing to complain of, could earn sixteen or eighteen shillings a week, and ate beef, mutton, or bacon every day. He did not think it right for a man as worked hard not to eat meat.

He had the Northumbrian burr in perfection, that peculiarity which stumbles so awkwardly at the *r*. "Yes, the baw-ies aw fine this yeaw" he said in reply to my praise of the gooseberries, meaning "the berries are fine this year." Ask a Northumbrian to say courier, and you will get a cooheous answer. "What do they burn in that kiln?" I inquired of a woman at Ovingham; and she, though meaning bricks, said "B-hicks."

"Tupny (twopenny) awnges goin' f' a penny," used to be the cry of the girls who sold oranges in the streets at Newcastle.

Dr. Smiles in his *Life* of a famous Northumbrian, says that the burr is a sign of robust energy of character, wherein it seems to me he makes a mistake. Defects are hardly the result of energy. Comparatively isolated from the rest of the kingdom, the Northumbrians got into a slovenly habit of using their rugged speech, and so an accident became hereditary. They would be isolated, whether or not; and baffled even William the Norman. He had to leave Northumberland out of Domesday Book.

A Londoner knows that by some a touch of the burr

is regarded as an aristocratic distinction; and this is no new vanity, as we learn from Shakespeare, where the Lady Percy, magnifying Hotspur's memory in presence of the Earl, says—

> " by his light
> Did all the chivalry of England move
> To do brave acts; he was, indeed, the glass
> Wherein the noble youth did dress themselves.
> He had no legs that practised not his gait:
> And speaking thick, which Nature made his blemish,
> Became the accents of the valiant."

Between tangled hedgerows gay with wild roses, the lane descends steeply to the river, and you find pleasant walking along the bank, past West Boat Suspension-bridge—one of Captain Brown's achievements—to fields and meadows beyond. The river makes a bend here, and I had to cross a few acres of turnips to get to the point where the South and North Tyne meet together in one broad stream. It is a wild spot; a rough sandy bank, where coarse grass, gorse, thrift, and harebells intermingle at pleasure with scrubby alders, fronted by a sandy shingly slope, the dry margin of the river-bed not unlike a sea-beach. Looking the long reach of North Tyne, you see a vista of sparkling ripples, bordered by woods that clothe the base of Warden Hill, on one side, and an obtrusive brick yard on the other; and the blue summits of lofty fells far in the distance; and from those fells, fraught with tales and traditions of the Border land, comes the river, to mingle with the stream which brings memorable suggestions of the hills of Durham and Cumberland, and thus enriched, away flows the united Tyne some thirty miles farther to the sea.

Half a mile onward, and there is the bridge by which the Border Counties Railway crosses the river; a single

line, branching off from the Newcastle and Carlisle line, up the valley of the North Tyne, and planned to extend to Hawick when finished. The bases of the piers are circular, and the side towards the current is protected by an iron shield in the form of a cutwater: suggestive of winter ice and strong freshets.

Charming scenes open below the bridge: the sides of the valley heavy with woods rising high upon the hills; homesteads and parks sheltering therein, and on the left bank the short spire of St. John Lee, rising prettily above the trees. That spire reminds us of St. John, of Beverley, for he was once bishop of Hexham. Here, too, the river opens into a noble reach, flowing past the broad meadows, in the rear of which Hexham looks picturesque on its elevated site.

It was market-day, and great was the concourse in the market-place. The clumsy primitive-looking carts have not all disappeared, neither has the race of Home-spuns died out, for I saw specimens of both; the latter tall stalwart fellows, with tongues as rough as their hearts are warm; but they economise the warmth by a thick crust of caution. It is curious to hear the mingled talk of town and country folk: one says he is going to Gilligate, meaning St. Giles's Gate; another is in what he calls a "difficulty," laying the accent on the ante-penultimate; another thinks it "yen comfort there's going to be a good hairst" (harvest); another makes an appointment for the "forend o' the efterneun;" another talks about the horse he bought "last backend" —last autumn.

How busy were the inconvenient narrow streets leading out of the central resort; wives and daughters buying groceries, trying on shoes and bonnets, while the goodman was driving shrewd bargains for grain or

beasts; and carriers ordering things that must be ready by the afternoon. One woman was bargaining for what she called a "seeing-glass." What with the rusticity, the oddly built houses, and the irregular thoroughfares, there was much of picturesqueness in the scene, heightened by touches of antiquity. "We came, at length, to Hexham," says Roger North, "formerly a metropolis of a famous Shire of that Name. From the Entertainment and Lodging there, it might be mistaken, but whether for a Scotch or a Welsh Town, may be a nice Point for the experienced to determine."

And if we may believe a rhyming barrister, the town was but little improved a century later; for he describes the judges as leaving Newcastle for Carlisle, on the Northern Circuit—

> "With this sure fate (enough to vex 'em)
> One night between to inn at Hexham."

Among the antiquities you will notice an old curious narrow-fronted house in the market-place; the Moot-hall, which looks as if it may have been a keep as well as a council-hall, so massive is its weather-beaten tower; and a little to the east a larger tower, of unknown date, remarkable for its narrow lights, mere slits, and cornice-like range of corbels.

But the pride of Hexham is the Abbey Church; a relic which, though much despoiled, preserves the memory of a dignified past. Here a monastery was founded in 680 by St. Wilfred of York, and Saxon bishops had their seat here until the Danes came in the ninth century, and burnt and slew after their manner. Then followed 200 years of ruin and neglect, ere, early in the twelfth century, the present church was built. Not long did it flourish; for before the next

century closed, the unruly Scots burnt down the nave, and plundered the priory: and by and by the finishing stroke was given by the first Defender of the Faith, who to defeat the prior's opposition ordered him to be hanged.

The nave was never restored; consequently, there remain only the choir and transepts, crowned by the tower. The style is Early English, and is especially remarkable for the absence of the elaborate ornament usual in pointed architecture. Here the effect of graceful form is strengthened by simplicity; though sadly marred by neglect and whitewash, and churchwardenising generally. Admirable, nevertheless, is the view of the lofty arches of the tower, and the range of smaller arches in the clerestory. Admirable, also, the view of the choir, with its quaintly carved shrine of stone; and a carved stone altar, and decayed paintings, and a venerable relic of the olden time—a Fridstool, as at Beverley, bearing a Runic ornament. There is a Lady-chapel much dilapidated, and a flamboyant screen painted with subjects from the Dance of Death. You may see an old carved font, supposed to be as old as the church itself, and sculptured monuments of knights and nobles of doubtful identity. It is not encouraging to stand musing over an Umfraville, and discover afterwards that it was an Errington.

I found the clerk at the Mechanics' Institute, and he let me up to the top of the tower, telling me as we went about the wonderfully sweet peal of bells; that the time of neglect had come to an end, that a beginning was made in the restoration of the noble church. The chief promoter of this praiseworthy work is Mr. Beaumont, a name well known in these parts, as we have already heard. The prospect that looked so charming

during our walk by the river, is not less charming viewed from this elevation, and the Tyne becomes associated in our mind with sylvan beauty. We can see the levels where the great battle was fought in May, 1463, which completed the triumph of Edward IV. over Henry VI.; the woods where Queen Margaret wandered a fugitive, and contrast the fifteenth with the nineteenth century, perhaps in our own favour. Looking northwards, distant about four miles, we scan the line of country traversed by the Roman Wall, a relic of antiquity not to be lightly spoken of; which we may hope to see closely before our holiday be over. Meantime, if we look down upon the huddle of houses at our feet, we see the Present as busy and eager over things of the hour as if the Past had never existed.

At one end of the town you find a trace of the monks in a street named Priestpople: at the other, is the Seal, a large open pleasure ground, which once belonged to the abbey: one of those places where children may play "for ever." Between it and the church are yet to be seen some remains of the conventual buildings, a gateway, the site of the cloisters; and under the ground once covered by the nave, is a Saxon crypt, not one large vault with heavy groined ceiling and low massive pillars, but a number of small chambers with round-headed doorways of communication. The largest exhibits traces of having been once used as a chapel.

But while in this gloomy place you will see something to wonder at; old though it be, the walls are built of something yet older—stones from the Roman Wall. You can still see the curious marks cut by the masons who first squared them, and in the roof of one of the

passages an inscribed tablet bearing the names of two of the emperors.

I lingered so long in the renewal of former recollections, and in a stroll to the bridge, that evening was creeping on when I started afresh on my walk down the vale. Three miles on, and Dilstone Castle appears high on the right, once the home of the Earl of Derwentwater, whose loyalty to the unworthy Stuarts cost him his head. A flag was flying from the top of the tower, and on emerging from the bye-lane into the park I saw a numerous gathering of perhaps five hundred teetotallers indulging in a holiday.

"We're making our fortunes as fast as ever we can," said one of the row of fruit-women who sat on a bank within the gate, in reply to my remark that they did not appear to be overdone with business.

"What," I asked, "don't they like fruit?"

"They've got something on 'em," answered the woman, with a toss of her head. "Teetotallers always brings what they wants in their pockets."

The fun was over, and now the revellers stood in a throng listening to speeches. As I came up, a hearty clapping of hands greeted the close of Mr. Grey's speech. No doubt it was a good one. We have since then seen how well he can handle the pen, in his reply to the French Government, who, miserably benighted on the subject of free-trade, begged for information from Northumberland, and got it fraught with more common sense than finds its way usually into a ministerial portfolio. Mr. Grey resides at the castle: he is agent to the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital for their northern estates, once owned by the Derwentwaters.

A lofty bridge of one arch bestrides the Devil Water,

a brook which, rising in the hills that look into Allendale, flows down a steep stony channel to the Tyne. Long drought had diminished the stream: here and there remained pools connected by mere threads of water; and all between, the stone lay bare and bleached as a pavement. Tradition says, that on that fatal day when the Earl was beheaded, the Devil Water ran blood; and the sky glowed redly at night: an ominous sign, which was, however, due to the aurora borealis.

From the bridge a steep ascent leads up to a level, on which stands the castle. Of the old ruin there remains little besides the dilapidated tower, now used as a cowstall; and a modern mansion abutting thereon occupies the site of the hall whence the Earl rode forth on his chivalrous enterprise. As the ballad says—

"Oh! Derwentwater's a bonny lord,
He wears gowd in his hair,
And glenting is his hawking ee,
Wi' kind love dwelling there.
Yestreen he cam to our lord's yett,
An' loud, loud would he ca',
'Rise up, rise up, for good King James,
And buckle and come awa'.'"

Alas, that this other ballad should ever have been written—

"Albeit that here in London town
It is my fate to die,
Oh, carry me to Northumberland,
In my father's grave to lie.
There chant my solemn requiem
In Hexham's holy towers;
And let six maids of fair Tynedale
Scatter my grave with flowers.

"Farewell to pleasant Dilstone Hall,
My father's ancient seat;
A stranger now must call thee his,
Which gars my heart to greet."

In the rear stands a small chapel, which, judging from appearances, has long been used as a storeroom; but more interesting than the building is the view seen from the hill: the Tyne is about a mile distant; the course of Devil Water is shown all the way by a double irregular line of trees, a close alley of foliage; the house and domain of Beaufront appear on the opposite side of the vale; Corbridge is seen below on the right, and Hexham away on the left; and the quiet beauty of the landscape looks glorious under the golden light. I gazed for awhile, then crossing the hill, made my way down to Corbridge, and found quarters at the *Angel*.

Corbridge is a village on the left bank of the river, sixteen miles from Newcastle. Its most remarkable edifice is a peel, one of those solid towers, with machicolated corbels at the corners, built in the good old times for defence rather than comfort; in which the cattle found shelter as well as their owner. It stands by the churchyard, and was for some years inhabited by the rector. It was built in the reign of Edward II., when the manor of Corbridge belonged to the first Lord of Alnwick.

Sundry Roman remains have been found here, for this was the ancient Corstopitum. Chief among the relics is an inscribed silver plate, discovered a few years ago under the sandy bed of the river, now preserved in the Duke's museum at Alnwick Castle, and by a copy in the museum of the Society of Antiquaries at Newcastle. Hence Corbridge presents us at once with some of the most noteworthy characteristics of Northumberland.

I am tempted here to give up another page to Roger North, for he brings before us a by no means unin-

teresting sketch of the characteristics, as he saw them. The assizes at Newcastle having terminated, he writes, "His Lordship's Route lay to Carlisle. The Northumberland Sheriff gave us all Arms; that is, a Dagger, Knife, Penknife, & Fork, all together. And because the hideous Road along by the Tyne, for the many & sharp Turnings, & perpetual Precipices, was for a Coach not sustain'd by main Force, impassable, his Lordship was forced to take Horse, & to ride most Part of the Way to Hexham. We were shewed where Coal Mines burnt under ground; but could discern nothing of it besides the Deadness of all Plants there. We were shewed the Picts Wall; but it appear'd only as a Range, or Bank of Stones all overgrown with Grass, not unlike the Bank of the Devil's Ditch at Newmarket, only without any Hollow, & nothing near so big. Here his Lordship saw the true Image of a Border Country. The Tenants of the several Manors are bound to guard the Judges through their Precinct; and out of it they would not go, no, not an Inch, to save the Souls of them. They were a comical Sort of People, riding upon *Nags*, as they call their small Horses, with long Beards, Cloaks, and long, broad Swords, with Basket Hilts, hanging in broad Belts, that their Legs and Swords almost touched the Ground; & every one, in his Turn, with his short Cloak, and other Equipage, came up Cheek by Joul, and talk'd with my Lord Judge. His Lordship was very well pleased with their Discourse; for they were great Antiquarians in their own Bounds."

Early as it was when I started the next morning, I saw a party of labourers drinking whiskey in the tap-room; it gave them heart, they said, for their work. The old story; 'tis always because it does them good,

not because they like it, that tipplers drink. About two miles on the way I turned willingly from the high-road to a lane on the right, and then, on nearing the river, my walk became delightful, between banks of ferns and flowers, overshadowed by beech and ash and elm. Here and there you get a twinkling glimpse of the stream through the trees; anon, a clear view of the broad current, and of woods on the opposite hill slopes, rushing down to the water's edge. Whichever way you look the landscapes are sylvan and pastoral. No wonder that Bewick wrought out charming tail-pieces, with such a country to wander over; nor that Northumbrian Akenside should have written:—

"O, ye dales
Of Tyne, and ye most ancient woodlands; where,
Oft as the giant flood obliquely strides
And his banks open, and his lawns extend,
Stops short the pleased traveller to view
Presiding o'er the scene some rustic tower,
Founded by Norman or by Saxon hands:
How gladly I recall your well-known seats,
Belov'd of old, and that delightful time
When all alone, for many a summer's day,
I wander'd through your calm recesses, led
In silence by some powerful hand unseen!"

Then past Bywell Hall, the seat of the Beaumonts, to the prettily situate village of Bywell, which looks out on a romantic bend of the river, where the water tumbles with cheerful roar over a long dam, and a bit of cliff shoulders up overhung with bush, and the shore is broken by patches of rock and wedges of green turf, and here and there a gravelly shoal rises from the ripple, and the mill nestles under the hither bank, and the wheel splashes round and round in the mill-race, and the prétty rustic church stands up on the right, with an old cross and ancient sculptured tombs

in the churchyard; and on the left appear the ivy-clad and embrasured wall and turrets of a house of the olden time, and noble trees growing all about complete the picture. What a pleasant retreat for the hard-working folk of Newcastle!

I sauntered for a while looking at the view from the churchyard at one end of the curve, and from the bridge on the other, at the old house—the castle, as the villagers call it—and the arched gateway in the rear; and then continued my walk down the river-side. Presently a locomotive snorts along the right bank, dragging a quarter of a mile, as one may guess, of laden coal-wagons; and on the hill above appear Mickley colliery, and a square of pitmen's cottages, and a long range of coke ovens, smoking furiously—ominous sign! We have come to the edge of the coal-field, and have to dread the exchange of green fields and blue sky for heaps of blackness and murky clouds.

Happily on our side the path runs for some distance yet through an inviolate landscape, and we are compensated for the sight of Mickley by a ramble through a wood, tall trees, and a hazel copse; then, from Eltringham ferry, we cross barley fields to Ovingham, guided by the church tower, while on the right the ruins of Prudhoe Castle appear proudly on the hill-top. Here you will perhaps notice a local peculiarity; the village is called Ovinjum, and all over the country the same two syllables are similarly pronounced. I met with but one instance to the contrary, and that was Chillingham, in which each syllable had its proper sound.

Ovingham church-yard is the burial-place of the Bewicks; on the west wall of the church two tablets record the name of John, who died in 1795, whose "ingenuity as an artist was exceeded only by his

conduct as a man;" of Thomas, who died in 1826, and of Isabella his wife; and on two slabs lying within a railed inclosure close by, the names of Isabella and Thomas are repeated. It is a quiet, sunshiny resting-place, on which the rains may fall, and around which the winds may blow so long as, in Jeremy Taylor's words, a churchyard is "the field of God sown with the seeds of the resurrection."

And on the opposite side of the river, on that bold, wooded slope, is Cherryburn—what a happy name!—once the home of the Bewicks. But the rustic thatched house has been pulled down and rebuilt, whereby the place has lost somewhat of its charm. The name, however, remains, to remind us of the happy engraver who transferred lovely little glimpses of scenery from Tyneside into books; refreshing to manhood and delightful to children. "'Tis a bonny world; go out to the fields," he used to say to them who complained of a dismal world.

The church has been repaired, and now boasts three lights of modern stained glass, carved pews in the chancel, and a lectern. "It is a pretty little place," said a man who, seeing me climb over the outer gate of the porch, came to the churchyard. Perhaps he was the sexton. "You wouldn't believe it, perhaps, but I've seen as many as six members of Parliament in here all at once of a Sunday; and that's something for such a litttle place as this; yet it's quiet enough now; but in Mr. Birkett's time (he was perpetual curate here, sir, for forty-three years), 'twas different. Then carriages used to be coming here pretty often; his old pupils, you see, coming to call on their master. Never wanted pupils, sir: had twenty-five all the time he was here; none of your small folk, but Blacketts

and Joblings, and Goodes, and Brandlings, and Cuthbertsons. Yes, sir, Ovinjum was a lively place in them days, and the old gentleman died worth a sight o' money."

The old man ended his talk by pointing out the new stone cross built on the site of the old market-cross, which he thought was "a sign that Ovinjum once had a market." Then, having dined at the village inn, where you may find good beer and a civil hostess, I went down to the ferry, whence Prudhoe Castle is full in sight: the most picturesque ruin, perhaps, in all Northumberland. The river is broad and shallow here, and while the ferryman urges the boat across, you can enjoy the view. Truly, the Tyneside Naturalist's Field Club have a pleasant country for their explorations.

Then there is a high and steep hill to climb, under tall trees, and amid vegetation that surprises by its luxuriance on so lofty a site. You see lavish bloom and foliage above the old grey garden wall, a bridge across the moat, and the moat deepening on the descent of the hill, until thick with wood, it resembles a glen, and the brook that flows down turns a little red-roofed mill that lies deep amid the foliage, and there is a pleasing sound in the drip, drip of the water from the wheel.

You pass through the barbican to the gate-tower, thence to a court, where you see, as at Dilstone, a modern residence abutting upon the ancient walls. The Duke of Northumberland is owner of Prudhoe, and one of his agents resides in the house. I asked permission to walk round and look at the keep, which was built by Odinel de Umfraville in the time of Henry II. On other portions of the ruin antiquaries have discovered mason-marks identical with marks

still traceable at Alnwick and Dunstanborough. The chamber over the gateway was used as a chapel, and is worthy of notice for its oriel window, which was one of the first, if not the first, projected on corbels, to give room for the altar inside; and apart from its architectural merits you will think it worth notice for its pleasing drapery of ivy.

To one not a critical antiquary, there will, perhaps, be more attraction in the broad and pleasing prospect over the Vale of Tyne, than in the sight of ancient masonry. Yet a chapter worth reading might be written about Prudhoe. The Normans, doubtless, found a Saxon stronghold on this high and advantageous position, for we find that Robert de Umfraville held it "by the service of defending it for ever from enemies and wolves, with the sword which King William had by his side when he entered Northumberland." His successor Odinel kept William the Lion at bay in 1174, until the Estoutevilles, the Glanvilles, the De Vescis, and other barons marching up, compelled the Scots to raise the siege. Spiteful under discomfiture, as the chroniclers tell us, they made their retreat as mischievous as possible, and stripped the bark off all the apple-trees.

Then there was a Gilbert Umfraville, who married Matilda de Lucy: this Matilda was left a widow, and became the wife of Henry de Percy, fourth Lord of Alnwick; and so Prudhoe came into possession of the Percys, and Lucies into their coat of arms.

Now we make a short stage along the right bank, descending the hill to the fields beneath, whence there is a good view of the castle as you look back. The vale still preserves its pleasing character: levels of pasture and tillage, bounded by wooded heights which

in some places stretch forward and terminate in a bold bluff upon the river, as at Prudhoe. A heavy shower came on as I passed a little group of cottages near an abandoned mine shaft. Wouldn't I come in and wait a bit, asked a man who stood nursing a baby at one of the doors. I did go in, and saw a home possessed of no small amount of comfort: a good-sized room, with stone floor, an oven and boiler, a blazing fire, a four-post bedstead, a chest of drawers, wardrobe, and press, and good store of minor plenishing, and all clean and well preserved. In one corner a ladder gave access to a room above, where the children slept. The man was a coke-burner at Mickley; time had been when he could earn thirty shillings a week; but now not more than twenty, sometimes less. He happened to be at home, because every other Thursday was his off-day; and while he minded the little uns, his wife had gone to Newcastle for groceries and other things: the fare was but eightpence halfpenny, and it paid, because at Newcastle there was more choice and better things for your money than in the village. He had five children, of whom three went to school at Prudhoe for seven-pence a week, and were getting bravely on with the larnin'. He liked when 'twas fine weather to walk in the woods on off-days and Sundays, and look at birds'-nests; liked to let the children see 'em; but didn't think it right to pull 'em. He liked, too, to see a good fire on; but coal was not very cheap: he had to pay five shillings for two corves, or thirty pecks.

Some folk, I thought, might come here and learn a lesson; they who have too much, and they who have yet to learn how much can be done with twenty shillings a week, or less. I took the children on my knee, and trotted them to *Banbury Cross*, with no

small satisfaction to all concerned. The man having a sympathising listener, talked freely; and would even tell me about the shaft which Mr. Blackett sunk nigh hand thirteen year ago; but the men were stopped by "a trouble," and now there was a vast of water in it. When the rain ceased, he pointed to a crevice in the wood where I should find a way-gate up the bank.

The bank is another of the bluffs which advance boldly upon the river, and from its brow you can see the village and bridge of Wylam, the red pantiled roofs, the potato-plots, the coal-works, pouring out great clouds of black smoke, blots upon the landscape, and fitful puffs of white steam from a locomotive dodging to and fro near the margin of the stream. Yet notwithstanding the smoke, and the crowding signs of busy trade in coal on each bank, rural Nature here maintains the supremacy; but looking eastwards we can already see a dense darkness in the air over the region where she is outraged utterly.

Let us pause here for a moment to remember that in this neighbourhood railways were invented. The men who had coal to send down to the river soon found that ordinary roads would not answer their purpose, and they laid down rails of wood for the wagons to run upon. Roger North says, "another remarkable thing is their *way-leaves*; for when men have pieces of ground between the colliery and the river, they sell leave to lead coals over their ground; and so dear that the owner of a rood of ground will expect 20*l.* per annum for this leave. The manner of the carriage is by laying rails of timber from the colliery down to the river exactly straight and parallel, and bulky carts are made with four rowlets fitting these rails, whereby the carriage is so easy that one horse will draw down

four or five chaldron of coals, and is an immense benefit to the coal-merchants." For a long time such roads were known as "Newcastle roads."

I crossed once more to the northern bank, and prowled about the black thoroughfares of the village, looking in at the cottages. There are exceptions to cleanliness, but where cleanliness prevails it appears the fairer by contrast with the sooty outside. Thick-set, happy-looking children play about as contentedly as if Wylam were in Arcadia. Now and then you meet a man or boy barelegged and as black or blacker than a negro, who has just come up from the pit, and is on his way home, safety-lamp in hand. Here and there you see one squatting by the fire-side, having a talk before his wash; and, as all the doors are open, you may perchance catch sight of one at his ablutions in a tub.

If it be right and proper to go on a pilgrimage to Stratford-on-Avon, so does it seem to me right and proper to go on a pilgrimage to Wylam. In the one place we render homage to intellectual genius, match-less for insight, imagination, and fancy, reigning undis-puted monarch wherever books are read; in the other, we recognise the triumph of intellect over mere brute matter, and do honour to the genius that battled bravely with adverse circumstances; thought, and strove and laboured with rude appliances, until iron and vapour became tractable in his hands as a well-trained child; and in eight hours men could travel from the Thames to the Tyne.

I sometimes walk into that stately hall at Euston Square for the pleasure of looking at the statue of George Stephenson, which there has a fitting site. A right stalwart hero, he stands there as he once stood

in a certain house at Westminster, composed and thoughtful, thumb in buttonhole; Wisdom before the Wigs, and getting the best of it.

After all, I found it hard to realise that George Stephenson had once been such an urchin as some among the groups playing here on the coaly pathways, clad in corduroy or fustian, and with not a few grimy smears upon their chubby faces. But inquire of the villagers, and you will find Geordie Stephenson remembered here and there among their household words. Jemmy Watt, at the public house, recollects how that when he was a boy, his father, who liked reading religious books, used sometimes to go and read to Geordie Stephenson's father, then a blind old man. Geordie was a decent lad, he says, and keen after the larnin'.

A railway for the transport of coal, runs from Wylam down to Lemington; follow this railway for half a mile, and you see on the left standing alone, one of the ordinary rude double cottages of the locality; and that is George Stephenson's birthplace. It stands on a pleasant spot; wooded heights rise beyond the river; the stream flows past broad and clear, and sufficiently near for its rippling to be heard, and hedgerows, plantations, and fields overspread the slopes in the rear. There is nothing squalid about it; the village is out of sight; all around is sylvan; so no wonder that Geordie was fond of birds and birds'-nests! It is just the place for birds; and as Jemmy Watt says, Wylam used to have more wood about it formerly than now: and there is no disturbance save when the coal-wagons rumble past, or the trains flit along the farther bank between Newcastle and Carlisle.

The pitman's wife at the cottage is very willing to point out the corner where Geordie was born; it is in

the lower room, not far from the oven. There is an upper room, with a stair for ascent; not a ladder. The rent, she says, is four pounds ten a year, including a garden. A few strangers have called, asking leave to look at the house; not many; two came not long ago, and took pictures of it in a thing like a lantern; and at the beginning of the summer there was a young man stayed a week about the place, drawing everything he took a fancy to.

The railway continues between the edge of a park and the river,—a pleasant green avenue. I had scarcely emerged from the farther end when the old engine —Hedley's engine—with tall upright cylinder, and sprawling working gear, came ranting and snorting along, dragging a train of laden coal-wagons. That was the engine, or one somewhat similar, that Geordie used to see passing before his father's door; and how he improved upon it needs not to be told.

A little farther, and there are signs of havoc; a pumping engine in a ragged meadow, working with so much fuss and noise that you might think it a cast-iron patriot trying to astonish the country. On the right the pale gray spire of Ryton church rises prettily from the trees; but every step brings us nearer to the dominion of art and manufacture.

A sudden thunderstorm drove me for shelter into a low pantiled shed, where I saw three men working at what was to me a novel business—crushing stone into sand. Two turned a wheel which made the crusher rise and fall, while the third stirred the lumps about beneath the heavy blows, and maintained the supply. One side of the shed was filled by a pile of the stone, brought from a quarry two miles distant, all to be pounded, that the housewives of the neighbourhood

might have sand for their floors. Why not use sea-sand? I asked. "Bless ye," replied the master, "sea-sand wouldn't do, it isn't gritty enough. If I only had a little engine to turn the wheel I should do; but a engine takes a vast o' money."

The storm kept on for more than an hour, and then, as it was "nigh hand six o'clock," the men went in to their tea, and I continued my walk down the now plashy railway. At Newburn I turned into a cart-road which winds in and out, and up and down among the houses, villages, factories, furnaces, inclines, and tram-ways that now line the heights above the river; a route that revealed to me a disagreeable variety of dirt and disorder. Pitmen, keelmen, stokers, labourers, battalions of the great army of industry, are here encamped in very unlovely huggermugger. Queer shops are scattered here and there, with provisions, brushes, and candles, strangely intermingled; others with "bullets," and sweet-stuff, and queer-looking toys. There is no appearance of want, of hard, grinding poverty; men, women, and children all look as if they had enough to eat. At times the river is visible, and we now look down upon keels, large flat boats laden with coal, poled along by brawny bullies, of whom we now and then meet a specimen on our way. Rough-tongued, hard-working fellows they are, happy if in their old age they find an asylum in the Keelmen's Hospital at Newcastle.

They are not beneath the notice of the Muses: one of the sprightliest melodies you ever heard is *The Keel Row*. Listening to it always puts quicksilver into my heels. Though the words be homely, the air will grace a drawing-room. Try it for yourself, fair reader:—

"Whe's like my Johnny,
Sae leish, sae blithe, sae bonny?
He's foremost 'mang the mony
Keel lads o' coaly Tyne;
He'll set or row so tightly,
Or in the dance so sprightly
He'll cut and shuffle sightly,
'Tis true—were he not mine.
Weel may the keel row, the keel row, the keel row,
Weel may the keel row that my laddie's in;
He wears a blue bonnet, blue bonnet, blue bonnet,
He wears a blue bonnet, a dimple in his chin.

He's nae mair learning
Than tells his weekly earning,
Yet reet frae wrang discerning
Tho' brave, ne bruiser he;
Tho' he no worth a plack is,
His awn coat on his back is,
And nane can say that black is
The white o' Johnny's ee."

Another Muse takes up the strain with:—

"My bonny keel laddie, my canny keel laddie,
My bonny keel laddie for me, O!
He sits in his keel as black as the deil,
And he brings the white money to me, O!"

Another, repenting perhaps of a bad bargain, sings:—

"I thought to marry a joiner,
To make me chair and stool;
But I have married a keelman,
And he's a perfect fool.
He's an ugly body, a bubbly body,
An ill-far'd ugly loon;
And I have married a keelman,
And my good days are done."

Having dipped into rhyme, let me quote another specimen from *The Invitation*, which gives us to understand that the water-side population of the Tyne know how to enjoy themselves after their manner:—

"Neighbours, I'm come for to tell ye, our skipper and Moll's to be wed,
And if it be true what they're saying, egad, we'll all be rarely fed;

They've brought home a shoulder of mutton, besides two thumping fat geese,
And when at the fire they're roasting, we're all to have sops in the grease.

And there'll be pies and spice dumplings, and there'll be bacon and peas,
Besides a great lump of beef boiled, and they may get crowdies who please;
To eat such good things as these are, I'm sure ye've but seldom the luck;
Besides, for to make us some pottage, there'll be a sheep's head and a pluck.

Of sausages there'll be plenty, black puddings, sheep fat, and neats' tripes;
Besides, for to warm all your noses, great store of tobacco and pipes:
A room, they say, there's provided, for us at the Old Jacob's Well;
The bridegroom he went there this morning, and spoke for a barrel o' yell."

The byeway brings us at length to the main road near Scotswood Suspension Bridge, and on we go with a smoky view before us, past King's Meadow Island, past the great engineering works at Elswick, past rows of suburban houses, to which clerks and shopmen are returning from the labours of the day, past the New Cattle Market, and in the dusk of evening, into the busy streets of the Metropolis of Coal.

CHAPTER VII.

Newcastle—A Surprising Town—Awful Smoke—View from the Castle—Relics of the Olden Time—Handsome streets—The Museum—Learned Antiquaries—Rarities—Chapel and Guard Room—Saint Nicholas—Grey Street—The Exchange—Business and Philosophy—Stephenson's Works—The Pasha's Locomotive—The Rocket—George Stephenson's Monuments—Distressed Shipowners—To Elswick—Sir William Armstrong's Works—Hydraulic Engines—Printing by Water-power—Mechanical Triumphs—The Armstrong Gun—The Oldest House—Unhappy Bank—Happy Men—The Ragged School—Useful Trades—Recreations—Music: Yankee Doodle—A Parting Song.

NEWCASTLE is a surprising town in many respects, for its history, site, trade, architecture, social economy, and smoke. If the wind be easterly your view of the place from the top of the castle will be almost as cheerful as the prospect of London in a November fog; and incredible as it may appear, you may safely pronounce Newcastle to be worse for smokiness than Sheffield. When the wind blows up the river, it is really awful. It is all very well to brag about commerce, and mineral resources, and wonderful bridges; but why not adorn these advantages by a rigorous precept against smoke?

Imagine yourself, reader, gazing from the embrasured turret of the castle aforesaid: you see bold hilly ground covered with houses, terminating steeply on the river, which here and for the remainder of its course separates the two counties of Durham and Northumberland.

You see the bridge which sufficed for the traffic in the days when stage-coaches contrived to ascend and descend the precipitous slope of Gateshead; and a little upwards, the high-level bridge from brow to brow, one hundred and fifteen feet above the river, across which express trains fly on the way from London to Edinburgh. A wonderful bridge truly, containing nearly three quarters of a million cubic feet of masonry, more than five thousand tons of iron, and built at a cost of more than a quarter of a million pounds sterling! With that before our eyes we may fairly back living Newcastle against Pons Ælii of the ancient days, and its victorious Roman garrison.

Below the bridge and along the quay the Tyne is crowded with ships, fishing boats, and other craft, and busy steam tugs; and above, you see a straggling fleet of keels. If you stroll up one of the narrow lanes or chares from that place of merchandise, you may see on the front of the Trinity House two old rusty anchors: trophies from the Invincible Armada. Of the old town wall, built to keep the marauding Scots from kidnapping the citizens, from behind which Hotspur marched to the battle of Chevy Chase, some fragments, a gate or two, and sallyport yet remain; and while wandering about in search of antiquity you will see squalor and huggermugger comparable only with that which we saw in our yesterday's walk, or with scenes discoverable in Wapping and Rotherhithe. But turn away from the river till your eye meets the stately column on which the statue of Earl Grey stands high aloft, and you behold a surprising sight: streets that might have been brought from that handsomest of European cities, Edinburgh, and placed here as gems in a poor, not to say ugly setting. You there behold the rare spectacle

of entire reconstruction and beautifying in the very heart of a large town. How large may be judged of by the fact that taking both sides of the river we overlook the abodes of more than one hundred and thirteen thousand inhabitants.

The castle itself is well worth a visit. You would take it for a Norman keep, as it stands here isolated near the bridge, with walls sixteen feet thick. A civil old woman receives your sixpence, intimates that if you like you may sign your name in a book, and leads you into the great hall, where the lofty arched ceiling is but dimly visible on a gloomy day, as your eye travels upwards from the old weapons and banners that hang on the walls. In one recess she shows you the well, ninety-six feet deep; another was King David's prison, after his capture at the battle of Neville's Cross: and then you are left to find the way up to the top, exploring all the ins and outs, and pondering over Roman inscriptions at pleasure. The ten stumpy guns which peer through the embrasures are as elegant in form as if Robert Shorthose himself, the builder of the castle, had invented them. On the way down a civil old man admits you to the library and museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle; you see the horse-shoe table at which the learned antiquaries sit during their meetings, and you will perhaps think that a more appropriate meeting-room could hardly be found. Well have these northern archæologists proved their learning: one, a noble member, has recently interpreted the mysterious inscriptions graven on a chimney-breast at Chillingham Castle; and Dr. Bruce's book on *The Roman Wall*, shows how historical research and scholarship, combined with a loving examination of ancient monuments, may renew the life of a dying subject, and

produce a narrative which many will read with as much pleasure as edification.

> "A chief among these famous men is Doctor Heavytome,
> Who has achieved a greater fame than all the gods of Rome;
> For Rome was not eternal, we know it by her fall,
> But the Doctor has decreed her an everlasting Wall."

Look round, you will see great store of Roman antiquities; and many a rarity of the olden time over which it is not unprofitable to linger. Among them are rude weapons of the stone age, rude weapons of the iron age, a fac-simile of the silver plate found in the river at Corbridge, an inscribed plate dug up at Lindisfarne, a silver ring found on Towton field, a pair of gloves once worn by the Earl of Derwentwater, and others which inspire varied emotions as you muse over the cases. And last, you descend to the chapel and guard-room in the basement, and the graceful style of the one, and the grim strength and huge groins of the other, will perhaps excite your admiration more than all the rest of the fortress.

If you love to contemplate tombs and monuments and good ecclesiastical architecture, take the trouble to discover the beadle, and get him to admit you into the church of St. Nicholas. There is something cathedral-like in its appearance and proportions; but marred by the close ranges of ugly pews. Look at a drawing which hangs in the vestry, and you will see how much of beauty the church has lost by the interference of iconoclasts or churchwardens. The sounding board of the richly carved pulpit shown in the drawing is now used as the vestry table.

Then walk up Grey Street and view the handsome architecture, and note how a town may be improved and embellished by intelligent enterprise. Read the

story of the improvements as related some years ago by Harriet Martineau, in the *Penny Magazine*, and you will learn how much Newcastle owes to its improver—Mr. Grainger. Street after street grew up under his energetic management, and where so much good was intended one regrets to see here and there houses still unfinished—mere shells—presenting a fair mask to the thoroughfare, but dark and inconvenient in the rear. And who would inhabit a gloomy residence above a shop in a noisy street, that could rent a house in some suburban terrace?

Go into the Exchange; note the signs of business; the brief pithy telegrams from the *Latest News* and *City Article* of the *Times*, affixed to the great columns, in anticipation of the mail. Then as a contrast visit the Philosophical Institution, and observe the library, museum, the sculptures, the slabs from Nineveh; bearing in mind that in this busy trading town the Institution finds nearly twelve hundred members willing to pay a guinea a year: that in their list of names you will see not a few eminent in art and science; John and Albany Hancock to wit, who rank among the foremost of naturalists.

To walk through the works of Messrs. Robert Stephenson & Co., is somewhat amazing, especially after a visit to that poor little cottage at Wylam. The one so lowly, the other so mighty! Fifteen hundred men were at work, busy as bees, with all that clang, bang, and uproar, that whirling and sliding, that marvellous ingenuity and quick dexterity which Sir Francis Head described so well in *Stokers and Pokers*. The young man who showed me round, talked as coolly of fifty locomotives being in hand for France, amid all the usual work, as a baker would talk of fifty loaves.

I saw the engine building for the Pasha of Egypt, which was to combine Oriental luxury and magnificence with English strength and celerity: and, as since proved, the result was a triumph of workmanship. There was a door in front of the carriage from which the Pasha could step out upon "the plate," whenever he took a fancy to drive the engine himself.

I wanted to see *The Rocket*, and it was pointed out to me in a yard, standing neglected amidst a heap of rusty iron, as a thing of no account. There it stood without chimney, the boiler stripped of tubes, the working gear all gone; but there it was the same original frame, the wooden wheels with flanged tire that gained the victory on that eventful day, between Liverpool and Manchester. And although George Stephenson had Mr. Booth as partner in its construction, his name and his triumph are nevertheless so much associated therewith, that while looking at it I said to myself, had my father been the builder, the ragged old *Rocket* should at all events have a shed to itself, and shelter from the weather.

However, let us not forget *Number One*, which stands on the pedestal at Darlington, placed there by praiseworthy Friends, as a memorial of George Stephenson, who alone achieved it. For many a year did *Number One* do the work it was built to do.

I went down to the quay and dined at an eating-house, desirous of hearing what the traders who there congregate had to talk about. I found they had taken up the distressing grievance which used to be the exclusive property of unhappy farmers, and all were agreed that prosperity would never return to the Tyne until Protection was raised from the tomb, and made over to shipowners by Act of Parliament. They laughed at my suggestion

that perhaps shipbuilders and shippers had been as reckless as the stocking-weavers, cottonspinners, hardware manufacturers and others, who cramming goods into the market quite regardless of the real demand, mistook the sudden bubble for prosperity. As if there could be too many ships! That wasn't it: British ships were lying idle because Swedes, Norwegians, and Yankees, were allowed to come in and do the trade that British ships ought to get; and without allowing the same privilege to British ships in foreign ports in return. Was it fair for the Yankees to call it a coasting voyage from New York to California, and keep it all to themselves? Might we not as well call it a coasting voyage from Newcastle to Bombay? Things couldn't go on that way; but much-enduring John Bull would have to get into a passion before government would give him fair play. Meanwhile the Tyne had made up its mind to keep on grumbling.

From the discontented dinner I walked out to Elswick, where Mr. (now Sir William) Armstrong favoured me with a sight of his works, under the guidance of an intelligent clerk. To describe this place as it deserves would require, not a page or two, but whole chapters, such are the magnitude and variety of the operations there carried on. I saw brawny smiths forging chains link by link, and small mountains of finished chains lying ready for transport not far from the ruthless machine by which their strength had been tested. I saw an iron bridge building for India, and small iron steamers for the navigation of Indian rivers; and huge engines for sundry purposes, beside which the men looked dwarf-like; and gangs of rivetters wielding their hammers with deafening din.

But Elswick is famous for hydraulic engines; and

for his ingenious application of water as a motive power in place of steam, Sir William is as well known among engineers, as he is popularly for the Armstrong gun. He has shown that springs and streamlets, which have run to waste for ages in hilly districts, may be made to collect themselves into an accumulator at high pressure, and in flowing from thence do the pumping and winding, raising and lowering, usually done by steam. He lays a cylinder underground at the foot of a crane, attaches one end of the lifting chain to the piston, and then by turning on a supply of water, the crane does any required amount of work. The crane on the quay at Newcastle is a specimen; and at Grimsby docks ships are laden and unladen by water power with surprising rapidity. Twelve hundred tons of coal were lifted out of a ship in one day by a hydraulic crane in the Victoria Dock, on the Thames. The hydraulic engine that draws the coal wagons up the incline at South Hetton colliery, is impelled by the water that drains for the most part out of the upper half of the shaft. Wherever a head of water, natural or artificial, is available, there may advantageous use be made of a hydraulic engine. There is no fire, no heat, no smoke, no outrageous uproar with blowing off steam when the engine stops; but a tranquilly energetic movement, and in the pauses the water-engine settles into quiet as comfortably as a good man folding his hands for repose.

With hydraulic engines the ordinary water supply of a town may be turned to account. The *Chronicle* office at the foot of Grey Street, in Newcastle, is on the slope of a hill; and in that office a small four-horse hydraulic engine is kept working by the water as it runs through the pipes down the slope, printing

a daily paper, and driving other presses, of which eight or ten are for lithography. Hence it appears that water may be very profitably employed in places where steam would be too troublesome or too expensive. Even in London a thousand gallons of water can be supplied for fourpence.

The first water-pressure engine in England was set up by a Mr. Westgarth, at one of Sir Walter Blackett's mines at Coalcleugh, in 1765. Of one fixed at the Butterly mines, Derbyshire, the story runs that it kept on working for seventeen weeks, without any one having even looked at it in all that time. At Dundee, a hydraulic engine was used to turn a lathe; at York, to keep in motion the ventilating apparatus of an hospital; and, now, since Sir William Armstrong's improvements, hydraulic cranes are used at docks and railway stations in all parts of the kingdom, and at factories too, for, by a cunning convolution of the chain, it is possible with a cylinder not more than ten feet long to lift a bale of goods to the topmost floor of a tall building.

What a crowning triumph it would be if Sir William would only send a ship across the Atlantic with a hydraulic engine. With no coal to carry there would be abundant space for cargo, while passengers would be spared the annoyance of heat and dread of fire.

I saw the gun—the nine-pounder—with which the improvements commenced, and a pretty thing it is for one so astoundingly fatal. It rests on a slide which, by receiving the first shock of the recoil, saves the carriage from strain and disturbance: the sights are arranged to secure unfailing aim; it is loaded at the breech; the shot is smooth and cylindrical, some seven or eight inches long, with the foremost end finished to

a point; and the bore of the piece being rifled, the gunner may hit every time he fires, if he will. "Ah! that's the one that went eight feet into a solid butt of elm," said Sir William, seeing me take up a shot for examination that lay in the office.

The gun was first tried on the hills above Allenheads, in the rear of Kilhope Law, where the range is wide enough to obviate all fear of mischief. Afterwards it underwent rigorous trials before incredulous military officers at Shoeburyness, who had, at last, to confess that not a gun in all Her Majesty's service could equal it; and now we know that a thirty-two pounder has sent its shot more than five miles, the weight of the gun being less than one-half of the ordinary thirty-twos, while the durability is far greater.

Leaving aside all speculations as to the possible destruction and damage at distances of five miles or more, the Armstrong gun demonstrates its superiority and utility, if only by restoring to artillery the supremacy of range which it should have in the field. Since rifles were improved, artillery-men have not been able to keep out of range; but the Armstrong gun overshoots the new rifles as far as ordinary guns overshot the old musket, not to say farther, and therewith war will perhaps be satisfied, at least until new tactics are invented.

After so much exercise of bone and muscle and machinery, and considerations appertaining to slaughter, it is refreshing to see a reading-room and library for the use of clerks and workmen at Elswick. Great as were the operations I had seen, it seemed to me as I ended my survey with a walk through the offices, that their greatness was more exemplified by the surprising number of clerks engaged upon drawings and plans, than by any thing else.

I walked back to the town, and rambled about some of the back streets looking at the Friary—Friars as the natives call it—a curious old building, inclosing a quadrangle. There in the chapel Edward Baliol did homage to Edward III., in June, 1334; and over one of the doors you may read an inscription,

> "By hanĭer And hand
> All artes do Stand. 1679."

Not far off, in Low Friar Street, stands the oldest house in the town, built in the reign of Henry VII., dingy and decrepid, exhibiting still on its front the shield and sculptures which once made it beautiful, now nearly worn out by age and weather.

Among a variety of songs hung up for sale in these shabby back streets I noticed one entitled *Happy Men*, which as it bears the Newcastle imprint ought to have been sung at the board meetings of that Northumberland and Durham District Bank which came to such a disgraceful failure. Its precepts might have saved the directors from shame, if not from sorrow. The author invites all "that has their means outrun" to listen to his rhymes, to strike out a new plan, to think of other things besides money, and "they'll all be happy men." And he proceeds to say or sing:

> "If your wife should prove a fruitful vine,
> Still at your good luck don't repine,
> Children none, or children nine,
> Bear it like a man.
> Practise strict economy,
> Keep up a plump physiognomy,
> Dine off your own mahogany,
> Take lunch where'er you can.
> Keep creditors from off your door,
> They may be insolent;
> Pay twenty shillings in the pound,
> And don't be insolvent;

Lay by your rent for quarter-day,
Never owe when you can pay,
Lay by your cash for rainy day,
Then you'll all be happy men.

* * *

Don't mix in too much company,
Teetotaller nor drunkard be,
Live well, but do not live too free,
Then you'll need no warming-pan.
Ask favours with humanity;
If you grant one, don't be grand;
Unite with your own family,
Or your house will never stand.
Do business first, and pleasure last,
You can't redeem the time that's past;
Be not too slow, nor yet too fast,
Then you'll all be happy men."

Then I called on a worthy Quaker, and nothing would do but I must put off my voyage down to Shields till the morrow, and go with him there and then, to see the Ragged School. Well, I saw the Ragged School: more than two hundred boys and girls rescued from dirt, wretchedness, and crime; and came to the conclusion that Newcastle has, perhaps, no institution more beneficent. Besides getting sound practical instruction and training in useful trades and employments, a considerable number of the children are fed and clothed. The buildings are all new, and comprise residences for the master and mistress, as well as schoolrooms, store-rooms, workshops, and other offices. Twelve of the elder girls reside on the premises, and are trained as domestic servants: places are afterwards found for them in the town and neighbourhood, and it is an encouraging indication that these girls when taking their turn out on Sunday, often go and pass the whole time at the school. Sackmaking, and teasing of horsehair and oakum, and tailoring, are among the employments. A master-tailor attends from

one o'clock to four, to cut out and superintend the work, and the boys make their own garments, out of old clothes given by benevolent friends. One gentleman buys every year the cast-off suits of the town police, at a sort of Dutch auction, and sends them all down to the Ragged School. It is in contemplation to build other workshops, and to increase the number of boys to two hundred, and to send one half into school and the other into the workshops on alternate days. Printing is to be one of the trades introduced, and shoemaking; but in the latter case, the boys are to work for a tradesman in the town who will supply all the materials, and send a master-shoemaker every day to the school to give instruction.

Hitherto the results have proved satisfactory. Magistrates and police concur in testimony as to the diminution of juvenile crime, and of disorderly conduct in the streets, since the opening of the Ragged School. In some instances the children's influence has produced a change for the better in their parents; and cases of extraordinary ability have been exhibited among the boys. One of the students now in the Free Grammar School was formerly a Ragged School boy. Of twenty-six boys who have gone to work, the Superintendent reports "they are doing well; many of them a credit to themselves, and an honour to the Institution. Two are in the service of the Electric Telegraph Company; one lad is with Mr. Pattinson, analytical chemist; another learning watchmaking; another farming; and the remainder various trades and manufactures." The daily instruction is supplemented at times by evening lectures, illustrated by the magic lantern, to which, at times, the Shoe-black Brigade are invited, and an occasional festival, or rail-

way trip in summer, perhaps to those pleasant grounds we saw at Bywell, opens to these poor children a source of enjoyment, and lifts them into a sphere of hopefulness which, but for this thoughtful benevolence, they would never have reached.

It did me good to have a talk with the master, a Scotchman thoroughly in love with his work, as all schoolmasters ought to be. He pointed out a few of the foremost boys: if there be any truth in phrenology, they have good heads; one of them manifests remarkable ability in mathematics, and it is to be wished that some influential person would put him in the way of gaining a scholarship.

The proceedings of the day ended with singing, and then away went the throng, I hope with melody in their hearts; all but some three or four who stayed for a music lesson. My Quaker friend, to his honour be it spoken, had recently given fifes to these amateurs, and already they could play a march and step a measure along the room. I asked for *Yankee Doodle*. No one present had ever heard it. Could I give an idea of it? Could I not? The boys listened while I chanted that lively melody; and I had scarcely gone twice through it, when one caught and rattled it off merrily on his fife. Favourable promise, I thought, that the air which makes American hearts throb with emotion would soon enliven the Ragged scholars.

Then I saw the residences, the kitchen, wash-house, larder, with its store of provision, the bedrooms—in short, all that could be seen, and noticed everywhere the same proofs of order and cleanliness. And before I left the kitchen, the girls training in household work were called in and asked to sing something after their

own choice. They stood in a row, put their hands behind their backs, and sang,

"Beautiful, sublime, and glorious,"

in a style which, though unadorned, sent me away filled with good wishes for prosperity to the Newcastle Ragged School.

CHAPTER VIII.

How Newcastle entertained a Lord—How it treats Steamboat Passengers—The Gateshead Gap—Embellishing the Quay—Sights on the Tyne—Town versus River—Ancient Boatmen—St. Anthony's—Locke and Blackett's Lead-works—Separating the Silver—Pattinson's Process—Rich Pigs and Poor Pigs—The Test—Refining the Silver—The Slag Furnace—Litharge and Red Lead—Slabs and Sheets—Pipes by Pressure—Annual Produce of Lead.

"His Lordship's Entertainment at Newcastle was very agreeable, because it went most upon the Trades of the Place, as Coalmines, Saltworks, and the like, with the Wonders that belonged to them, and the Magistrates were solicitous to give him all the Diversion they could: and one was the going down to Tinmouth Castle in the Town Barge. The Equipment of the Vessel was very stately; for ahead there sat a four or five Drone Bagpipe, the North Country Organ, and a Trumpeter astern; and so we rowed merrily along. The making Salt I thought the best Sight we had there."

What would honest Roger have written had the mouth of a drain been the starting-place of the barge, as it is of the steamers which ply between Newcastle and Shields, as if by the gratuitous sight of the turbid outflow, to stimulate your impatience to depart. On the Gateshead side I saw the gap made by the fire still open, a great slope of rubbish and ruin, amid crowding habitations and the stir of business, terminating upwards at the church. More room to live and breathe in was

much wanted in that quarter, and though the discipline was fierce, the town will be the better for it; and the flames by leaping across the river made quick clearance of a site on which is to be erected a pile of buildings for mercantile purposes that will make Newcastle prouder than ever of her quay. Seen from hence there is something peculiarly effective in the view of the high-level bridge, for the low bridge appears stretching across the bases of the piers as an arched curving plinth.

To a stranger, even to one familiar with the Thames below London, there is something surprising in the sight of the Tyne, with its busy traffic, its fleet of keels and steam-tugs, coal-ships, and merchant vessels from the north of Europe. Furlongs of pine balks float on the margin; the banks are for the most part high and steep, rough and bare, or patched with ragged grass; pantiled cottages dot the slopes, or crowd the levels and hollows, and here and there dormer windows appear that look as if imported ready made from Holland. Here and there a rough and ready jetty intrudes on the stream, here and there a wharf opposes its walls, some looking as if left to take care of themselves, and everywhere are rough and queer landing-places, and everywhere you see the smoke rolling in murky clouds.

The steamers appeared to me but little improved from what I remembered them in former years; perhaps as remarkable for slowness and scow-like build as ever. In one respect there is a change for the better; you are not liable to a detention of two hours at Tyne Main or Hebburn by shoals where the ugly little vessels always ran aground at low water. Miserable detentions were those, especially on a wet day. Vain were the endeavours of the solitary fifer or bagpiper to enliven them. I was glad to find that race of

persevering minstrels still in existence: we had one on board our vessel who, for a collection amounting to twopence-halfpenny, treated us to unlimited music. It appears to me that the corporation of Newcastle having such a river as the Tyne flowing past their quay, and the sea within a distance of ten miles, might find it a worthy object of ambition to maintain a channel navigable even for large vessels at all times of the tide. Some people say that to spend less on the town and more on the river would be wise. Surely both can be properly cared for, judging from what has been accomplished on the Clyde below Glasgow, and on the Lagan at Belfast.

There are no regular stopping stations for the steamers, nor any proper landing-places where you can step on shore from the vessel between Newcastle and Shields. You notify your wish to disembark to the steersman, he takes your fare, and orders the bell to be rung to summon a boat. While landing at St. Anthony's, about three miles down the river, I heard that the ancient boatmen who once attended on passengers, or plied at the ferries, had all disappeared. Those tough, weatherbeaten old fellows were among the most remarkable phenomena of the Tyne; always ready with a lamentation over the hardship of knocking about on the river after fighting for their king and country. Many an additional penny did they win thereby from strangers, and I remembered how, being young and softhearted, I had on sundry occasions fallen into the trap, once to the full extent of sixpence; but that was given to a venerable oarsman clad in a suit of tarpaulin, who pleaded that "his pipe o' backer was the only thing as seemed to do him any good." St. Anthony's is not in appearance an inviting place. The

bank is rough, the paths are rough and stony; and the cottages, which display many a broken pane, and the groups of dirty, half naked children playing or squatting about, harmonise with their environment. The cottages have an outer stair leading to the upper floor, and lodge two families, and though a few are very clean within, the general impression made on a stranger is unfavourable. There are a few good houses, but they look out of place on such a site where, what with the prevailing smoke, and the vapours from Pattinson's chemical works on the opposite side of the river, it is an affliction to open the windows. Not for a thousand pounds a year would I live in such a spot.

Guided by the towering chimney, I sought Locke and Blackett's lead-works. It was an agreeable surprise to find a garden inside the great gates, and an old gardener fondling his beds of pinks. The flowers came pretty well, he said, though 'twas smoky; and 'twas a pleasure to look after 'em when he was not wanted in the works. He thought the unthrifty-looking people I had seen at the cottages "didn't care much about sending their childer to school, and if they did, there wasn't any school in the place worth speaking of."

Presently Mr. Craig, one of the superintendents, came up. I presented my note of introduction, and was answered by such a ready compliance with my wishes, that I cannot deny myself the pleasure of repeating my thanks in print. His patience was exemplary; he neither hurried me, nor looked every ten minutes at his watch, and he talked down to my comprehension. The hour, indeed, was unusually propitious, for the works are so large, and the operations so various, that I saw much more than I had anticipated.

My first wish was to see the separation of silver from lead, and he took me to a spacious hall, if we may so call it, where sixteen huge pots or basins, each big enough to contain six or seven tons, are set in the brick floor, in two rows, and heated by furnaces constructed beneath. Immediately above the pots, a railway is erected on pillars to facilitate the transfer of lead from end to end. Workmen are busy with ladles, larger than warming-pans, lifting molten lead from one pot, and pouring it into another, at times stirring the liquid mass with an iron rod, but with deliberation, for the labour is severe, and in a high temperature. To the eye there is little or no difference in the contents of the pots, unless it be that some look brighter than others. Perhaps by a few minutes' consideration we shall be able to understand what is going on.

In all the lead hitherto produced in England there is more or less of silver. That of Derbyshire is the poorest, containing little more than an ounce of the precious metal to the ton, while in the lead of Cornwall there are from ten to twenty ounces. This, however, is nothing to what the history of metallurgy tells us of days gone by, when the Cardiganshire lead-mines yielded eighty ounces of silver to the ton, and some of the Yorkshire mines as much as two hundred and thirty ounces. Such richness as this might make us believe, with the old metallurgists, that Nature intended all the lead found in the earth to be silver, but from some accident had halted in her work before the conversion was fully complete.

Formerly there was so much waste in the process of refining, that it did not pay to refine the poor ores. The lead was kept in a furnace at almost a red heat,

losing many pounds in weight, and injuring the workmen's health by the thick fumes constantly rising, while the blast directed upon the molten surface, blew off the as constantly-forming film of oxide, in the shape of litharge, leaving at last a quantity of highly argentiferous metal, to be finished by a further process of cupellation. The loss in weight of lead by this method was about one-eighth; and so important does that become out of twenty thousand tons, the quantity usually refined in a twelvemonth, that many schemes were devised for preventing it. But distillation, and all other cunning devices failed, until the right one was discovered in 1829, by the late Mr. Hugh Lee Pattinson. He had once observed, while engaged in experiments at Alston, that melted lead formed crystals on its surface while cooling, similarly to what may be seen on the cooling of saline solutions; a grouping of the crystals round the edge of the basin. Having made this phenomenon the subject of investigation, he found that the proportion of silver in the crystals was much less than in the melted lead, and by following up the clue thus obtained, and availing himself of the simple natural law that melted lead will solidify while silver remains fluid, he had the satisfaction of bringing into general use a lead-refining process, in which the loss is reduced to perhaps less than the one hundred and twentieth part, which makes it profitable to separate the silver, if but three ounces to the ton, and which saves the workmen from the deadly fumes wasted in the old way.

Mr. Pattinson read a short paper on his discovery and its results at the Meeting of the British Association at Newcastle, in 1838; the value of "Pattinson's process" was at once recognised, and from that time

there has been an increase in the annual returns of the production of English silver.

With these particulars in our mind we shall now be able to appreciate the operations going on at the two rows of great pots above-mentioned. On looking attentively at one of the pots, under which the damper is shut to facilitate the cooling, we see the crystals shooting from the margin towards the centre; the man standing on the margin with his big ladle—which, by the way, is as full of holes as a colander—skims them off, and drops them into the adjoining pot on the left, and so continues, a stir being given from time to time with the rod, until the crystals are too few to fill his ladle. The comparatively pure metal is then lifted into the pot next on the right, then to the next, and so on to the last, becoming richer and richer in silver at each remove, while the lead, shifted and skimmed from pot to pot on the left, becomes poorer and poorer, and is ladled from the last into moulds, and cast into pigs. The rich metal at the opposite end of the row is in like manner cast into pigs, in readiness for the refining-furnace, and they show their superiority by a brightness which makes mere lead look poor and dull.

This, briefly, is the process of separation; as simple in fact as it is in description. No blast, no violent temperature is required: the workmen have nothing to dread from noxious fumes; and except when standing on the edge of the pots catching the reflection from the lead, I felt nothing uncomfortable in the atmosphere of the place. And besides all this, the lead is improved in quality, and rendered more suitable for all the purposes to which it is applied by the removal of the silver. Who would believe that such advantages were involved in, to use Mr. Pattinson's words, "an

act of true crystallisation, in which the homogeneous particles of lead are drawn together by virtue of their molecular attraction to the exclusion of the foreign body, silver?" It is an admirable example among many others, of the arts employing nature as their hand-maiden, and with the happiest results. The lead is improved; the supplies of silver are increased, the quantity produced in 1857 having amounted to 532,866 ounces.

It was an astonishment to me to see the magnitude of the piles of pigs, to which the workmen were every few minutes adding those newly cast. One can hardly help wondering where all the lead goes to. A considerable portion, as we shall presently see, undergoes a further conversion, changing its form and appearance. Let us follow first the rich pigs to the furnace where they undergo a second melting, and while the fire is doing its duty we will look at the preparations for getting the silver pure and perfect.

The refining furnace has a domed roof and a mouth wide enough to receive the cupel, or test, as the workmen call it, which is a sort of shallow oval tray about four feet in length, and three in width, made of bone ashes beaten into a firm and solid cake within an iron rim. There on one side is a heap of gray ashes, not dusty, but granular; that is the bone-ash. Formerly it was manufactured on the premises; but the odour from putrefying bones, and the vermin therein generated proved so sickening and offensive, that bone-ash is now bought of manufacturers whom hope of profit tempts into an unusually disagreeable branch of trade. Two men are busy with wooden rammers beating a test into shape, giving a thickness to the bottom of four inches, that it may stand the fire well. Portions of

the old burnt tests are ground up to mix with the material of the new ones, and for the same reason that makers of fire-clay crucibles find it essential to mix old with new—improvement of the quality. The test, when prepared, is run into the furnace, the melted lead, or rich metal, is let to flow in through a spout; the temperature is raised, and then the steam-blast being turned on, the surface of the metal is agitated by a succession of ripples driven in any direction at pleasure, and the lead, rapidly oxidised, is blown off through an opening in the side as litharge, and falls in a heap, somewhat resembling coarse brown ashes, on the floor. After about fifteen hours the oxidation ceases, the silver gleams brightly through thin cloudy vapours that rise from it; but these in turn disappear, purged completely out by the enduring heat, and at length the silver lies clear and effulgent as a molten mirror. The test is then drawn out, and left to cool, and soon the workmen lift a plate of silver weighing commonly 120 pounds, sometimes twice as much. At the time I peeped into the furnace the silver had about four hours yet to remain. It was a beautiful sight, a brilliant lake, tremulous as with excessive heat, throwing off now and then faint clouds that reflected the glowing radiance.

Litharge is largely used as an ingredient in the manufacture of glass, and by painters as a "drier" in the preparation of their colours; and many tons are reconverted into lead by a fiery ordeal in another furnace, hotter than the first and fed with coal. The slag too must have a fiercer temperature to make it yield; and watching the mouth of the furnace, it was interesting to see the roaring green flames, the lead running one way, the refuse slag, completely liquefied, another way, in a red-hot jet into a cistern of water in

the floor. There is a loud noise of boiling, but no sign of commotion in the water, which is a peculiarity of the slag; if it were lead pouring in, the boiling would be furious. The slag falls to the bottom of the cistern in a form which curiously enough resembles nothing so much as small coal, and in this state is waste, accumulating rapidly, and troublesome and expensive to get rid of.

In another large room, facing a range of furnaces, I saw broad heaps of something red lying on the floor. It was red-lead; a powder much used by painters, and in the mechanical arts. The colour is produced solely by the process of manufacture. The lead is roasted in a furnace at a temperature below the melting point, until it becomes coarsely granulated and of a yellowish green colour. This grain-metal is then ground by mill-stones, of which several pairs are erected along the middle of the floor, and undergoes thereby a curious change; for the appearance of the heavy stream of powder while running from the stones is precisely that of paste. This pale powder is thrown into another furnace, where, by the combined action of air and fire, its colour deepens into red, and as marketable red-lead it is drawn forth.

What with furnaces and continual extension and repair of buildings, the consumption of bricks is enormous, so much so, that the firm find it profitable to manufacture their own supplies at a brickfield about half a mile from the works.

The sheet-lead rolling machinery was not working; a sight thereof was, however, sufficient to show me the simple nature of the operation. A thick heavy slab of lead is laid on a broad flat iron bed, which rests on numerous small rollers, and runs easily to and fro,

carrying with it the slab, which at every advance and retreat passes between two large, ponderous rollers. By these its thickness is each time diminished, and its length and breadth proportionately increased, and in time sheets are produced of any required thinness or dimensions.

Next to the separation of the silver I took most pleasure in watching the making of lead pipes. I had once seen a pipe made by drawing a thick stumpy tube through smaller and smaller holes, until it was as small or long as desired; but here a different and much more interesting process is brought into play. We are in a small room at a corner of the works opening on the wharf. At one side is a brick furnace, containing a pot of melted lead; in front of it, firmly fixed in the solid ground, stands an iron cylinder, apparently four feet in height and one foot in diameter; and within a stride of this ranges the apparatus of a force-pump, from which two rods pass through the floor over our heads. We ascend to this floor—which, by the way, has a large gap at one corner—and see a sort of table with two handles, the ends of the rods—projecting from the top; in a line with the cylinder a large reel turned by a winch; and high aloft a crane and chain-tackle. We take our stand against the rail that faces the gap, and witness the operations. The furnace-man draws the tap, out runs a stream of melted lead along a spout, and fills the cylinder. Quick! the stream is cut off, and a pause takes place, during which the four or five men move to their several stations. The pause is to give time to the lead in the cylinder "to set," that is, to begin to solidify. Then, at the right moment a man gives a pull at the two handles, and immediately we hear the pump working with a

sound as if very much in earnest; and not without reason, for it is forcing a plunger down upon the lead. Solidifying lead is a tough antagonist; but the pump labours on, and soon there appears rising from the centre of the cylinder a smooth, bright leaden pipe, such as is used for the water-service in houses. Up—up—up it rises, within reach of the man at the winch, who, seizing the end, brings it to the reel, and winds it on as fast as it grows, and until the cylinder is empty. The plunger has reached the bottom, and forced all the lead up through the narrow collar at the top; and in this way coils of lead pipe are produced twenty-one yards in length.

I grasped the pipe as it passed gliding before me, but found it still too hot for an unaccustomed hand. The heat facilitates the coiling, but the largest size that can be coiled without flattening is an inch and three quarters in diameter. Above that size the pipe is made straight, rising perpendicular from the cylinder to the crane, by which it is held while sawn off in twelve feet lengths; and the process is the same for two, four, or six-inch pipes, the different diameters being determined by the different mandrils fitted as required into the head of the cylinder. Snugly packed in straw-bands, the coils and lengths are then ready for shipment.

While retracing my steps to the entrance, I could not help thinking about the prodigious quantities of lead which one hundred and fifty men working day after day must produce annually in this one establishment alone. It is, however, but one out of many, for the quantity of lead produced every year in the United Kingdom amounts to nearly seventy thousand tons. The tall chimney smokes vehemently, mostly sulphur

fumes, notwithstanding the use of condensers. These are cleaned out about once a month; the chimney is swept for its metalliferous deposit once a year.

I left the works grateful for interesting sights, increased knowledge, and cordial and intelligent guidance; and went down to the river.

CHAPTER IX.

On the River again—Walker, a Pandemonium—Shoving into the Smoke—The Pitman's Chant—Trade and Traders—Wallsend—Cohorts and Coal—Busy Staithes—Sights of Ships—Willington Quay—George and Robert Stephenson—Northumberland Dock—Hudson and Weser—Jarrow Slake—A Venerable Relic—Throng of Ships—North Shields—A queer Street—The Sea, the Sea, the Open Sea!—Busy Movement on the River—Thames and Tyne—The Durham Coal-field—Mighty Trade in Coal—Captain's Fare—South Shields—A Comfortable Sight—Jarrow Docks—Clang, Crash, and Uproar—From Scraps to Bars—A Spell of Purgatory—From Noise to Quiet—Venerable Bede: his Church, Convent, and Chair—Scramble up the Tower—Antiquaries to the Rescue!—A Strange Landscape—Growing Hills—Good-tempered Clergyman—The Ferry—Tees Water not Tyne Water—A Queer Walk—Hospitality at Tynemouth—The Cliffs—The Self-hoaxed Contractor—Lighthouse and Priory—Ugly Governor's House.

To me there appeared no difference between steam-tug and passenger boat; but the ferryman knew better, and let two or three of the wheezy paddlers pass before he rowed me off into the stream to catch "the packet," as he chose to call it. More music on board; a bag-piper and fifer who played *The Keel Row* delightfully. Presently we approach the Walker Iron Works, where a hundred black furnaces are blazing and roaring, and a horrid din prevails of thumping and smiting, and furious plunges, while men seem to be flitting to and fro, now in the dusk, now in the fierce fiery glare, and overwhelming clouds of smoke hide the sky with awful darkness. Looking on the scene one might almost fancy it a Pandemonium. "In gloomy weather," said the steersman, "when the wind blows the smoke across

the river, we drives into it, and takes our chance. You can't see the bowsprit's length ahead." Even as it is, with a bright and breezy day the atmosphere looks sullen for miles on each side of the river. The banks are crowded with manufactories for coal is cheap.

I heard of a man who retired from business and went to reside at Walker to spite his relatives; he endured it for a few months, but the overpowering smoke proved too much at last for consanguineous rancour: he dared never open a window night or day. But let us hear what the pitman sings:—

"When aw cam to Walker wark,
Aw had ne coat nor ne pit sark;
But now aw've getten twe or three,—
Walker's pit's deun weel for me.
Byker Hill, and Walker shore,
Collery lads for evermore;
Byker Hill, and Walker shore,
Collery lads for evermore."

So it is true of places as of babies: some one will be found to praise even the ugliest.

River and shore show more and more signs of trade and labour as we descend: half a dozen steamers on the stocks—rows of coke ovens all a-glow—troops of boiler-makers raising a deafening clatter—heaps, nay mountains, of slag and refuse ballast—more steamers on the stocks—cranes, sheds, chimneys, staithes—the big beam of a steam-engine rising and falling in the distance—piles of timber—inclines that resemble railway cuttings sloping down to the water's edge—while here and there a green field and hedgerow left amid the havoc and encroachment plead with silent eloquence for Nature.

There, on the left bank, is Wallsend, a name that carries the mind back some sixteen centuries, for there

was Segedunum: there the eastern end of the Roman wall that stretched across the island to the western sea—and to think of the legion with their eagles, and of the Sea-kings with their dar[illegible] fleets in later years, heightens the impression of [illegible]dern civilisation. Most minds, however, associate Wallsend with nothing but coal.

How busy are the staithes! Train after train of laden coal-wagons comes rattling down the slope, and wagon after wagon running singly forwards along the timbers as if to throw itself into the river, is caught by the drop, lowered to the hatchway of the vessel moored beneath, where the man standing by its side knocks out a bolt, the bottom opens, and the coal falls with a crash into the hold. Up goes the drop; the empty wagon is pushed aside, a full one runs into its place, and descends and discharges its burden ere the dust of the one before it has cleared away. Yet rapid as is the work it is not rapid enough, if we may judge from the number of vessels waiting their turn to load.

More ships, and big ones, in the building-yards, and at anchor in the river: steam-tugs busy as emmets—heaps of brimstone on the shore, heaps of strangely coloured refuse—cottages here and there with little gardens and flowers and vegetables defying the smoke. Look, look! yonder a coal-brig that has been hauled up for repairs slips off the ways into the stream with all her rigging standing. Barriers built of lumps of stone rise in broken lines above the water, showing the works in progress for narrowing the channel. Willington Quay appears through the smother on the left, and the house where George Stephenson lived and where Robert Stephenson was born:* farther, and with

* Since pulled down to make room for the Stephenson Memorial Schools.

embankments of up-piled stone sloped on the outside, carried far into the stream, the great Northumberland dock encroaches on the tideway. Its outer wall though rough and rudely finished supports a line of gas lamps, the effect of which when lit at night, seemingly in the middle of the river, must be strange. Opposite is Palmer's yard, from which the great iron ship *Hudson* was launched but a few days ago, and where we see a swarm of men hammering away at the rivets of the sister ship, the *Weser*. More barrier walls and lighters flinging in stone. The steersman says he is glad to see that work going on, because if something ain't done to improve the river, all the big ships will go to Sunderland and Hartlepool, and Tyne lose all its trade. A little farther, and Jarrow Slake, a great shallow bay, opens on the right, and the chimneys, and factories, and smoke, and coalworks make a great sweep around its margin. Who would look for antiquity there? yet there in the rear, where rises that square simple tower, stands the oldest church in England but one, and there dwelt Venerable Bede. I thought to land at Jarrow Point; but the tide is now full, and the scene on the river interesting, the whole breadth between North and South Shields appearing to be choked with ships; I feel curious to see how we are to get through, and therefore put off for awhile my visit to the ancient church. Now we approach the throng; what shouting, what confusion, what panting and paddling of steam tugs, what a drifting of large vessels! the tide is on the turn, and they want to get to sea. Slowly, slowly moves our steamer, then stops, and takes one heavy bump after another, as if used to them. Shall we ever get out? for ship after ship breaks away from the press on each side and makes for the middle stream. Are those men

philosophers who dodge about in the small boats with what resembles a chandler's shop on a small scale lodged in their stern sheets, that they look on so calmly, while every one besides seems to be working for dear life? We creep on slowly; the great steam ferry-boat comes slanting across, and before her track is closed up we, as one of the hands says, "shove into it," and are presently at the landing-place, catching as we cross a sight of great foaming waves tumbling on the bar, and the water has lost its muddy colour, and heaves and ripples all around us a clear bright green, fresh from the mighty tidal current of the North Sea.

Except the new landing-place, and the clearance thereby occasioned, North Shields appeared but little changed since I saw it years ago. We read of narrow streets in Eastern towns: can they be more picturesque, or incommodious, or dingy, than the principal street here nearest the river? While jostling your way along it you might almost fancy yourself carried back to the days when painting and window-cleaning were quite in their infancy. What queer dark shops, irregular doorways, and queer in and out windows above and below! and here and there the narrowest of alleys branching off, unsavoury of aspect. You would hardly like to buy anything at those grimy groceries or provision shops; much less to dine at that French or Italian restaurant, which if answering inside to the outside is by no means inviting. Look at that apothecary's: could you not picture it to yourself as the very one where Romeo bought his poison? We must not, however, be deceived by appearances: fortunes are made in this narrow street, and some of the residents could buy up half a dozen of the showy

tradesmen in the upper part of the town. The signs of business are unmistakeable; and you feel that the traffic is inconvenient, for you are jostled by seamen and labourers, captains, mates, and pilots, to say nothing of the ordinary townsfolk, and the carts that go lumbering past making you get out of the way whether or not.

It is a steep ascent from this narrow thoroughfare to the wide streets and squares of the upper town. One of the streets terminating abruptly on the height above the river, commands a good view of the crowded stream, of South Shields on the Durham shore opposite, and of the sea dotted with white sails, stretching far, far away till the dark blue water meets the bright blue sky. The sea! Who is there on first beholding it once more after months of city life feels not a thrill of bounding emotion?

For awhile I saw nothing but the broad blue expanse; but the nearer objects had their turn. Here lies the *Hudson*, moored immediately beneath; a noble vessel truly, with a length of deck that makes other vessels appear small. The group of men who stand lazily looking down on the broad river, are talking about the strange accident that befel on the first trial of her engines a day or two since—the breaking of both her pistons at the same time, and they wonder whether she will not have to pay a fine for failing to sail on the appointed day from Bremen to New York. The stir and confusion still continue among the ships: I could stand and watch it for hours. Even a native is impressed by it; for what says the song?

> "A Cockney chep shew'd me the Thames' druvy feace,
> Whilk he said was the pride o' the nation,
> And thought at their shippin' aw'd make a haze gaze;
> But aw whop'd ma foot on his noration.

Wi' hus, mun, three hundred ships sail iv a tide,
We think nouse on't, aw'll mak accy davy:
Yer a gouck if ye din't knaw that the lads o' Tyneside
Are the Jacks that mak famush wor navy.
'Bout Lunnun, then, divn't ye mak sic a rout,
There's nouse there ma winkers to dazzle;
For a' the fine things ye are gobbin' about
We can marra iv canny Newcassel."

And along each side of the stream for two miles you see houses, chimneys, building yards, wharfs, foundries, roperies, here and there a tanyard, all in the full swing of business, and all more or less hidden by smoke: and in some places a ballast-heap shouldering up away among the houses. Yonder the horizon is completely hidden by the smoke of the great Durham coal-field, rising high in thick clouds day and night, as from a land ravaged by fire. Yet how suggestive of industry, and the wealth that industry brings. Under the edge of that dismal canopy lies Harton pit, at the bottom of which the Astronomer-Royal made his interesting pendulum experiment on the density of the earth, a few years ago. How refreshing to turn from the gloom to the sea dancing in the sunlight! The Tyne showed us beauties manifold away there in the west among the woods and hills; and here at its mouth interests us with the sights and sounds, and the restless goings to and fro of an abounding trade. Having seen this sight we shall not be surprised to hear, that in 1858, the quantity of coal shipped from the Tyne amounted to 4,437,903 tons; of coke, 152,950 tons, while of merchandise other than coal the value was 1,055,996*l.* sterling. In 1857 the produce of the 268 coal-mines in Durham and Northumberland was nearly 16,000,000 tons.

After satisfying myself with the view, and reviving

my recollections, I went down to the narrow street in quest of a dinner. A policeman showed me an eating-house where the captains dine. It was as old-fashioned as the rest, but clean. Up stairs I found a large room, and a long table, and a good-sized round of beef, behind which sat an elderly man—we will call him Dominus—eating with brisk appetite. He at once offered to help me; and he helped himself too to a second instalment saying, that "he felt in good fettle for his dinner." And so did I for mine; and what with good beef, good ale, and gooseberry pie, had no reason to be discontent with captain's fare. Of course we talked: I asked him the shortest way to the old church at Jarrow. Why, he was going within five minutes of it himself: it was about three miles; we could walk together, if I liked. I did like; and away we ran to catch the ferry-boat, for the bell was ringing. Every quarter-hour all through the day those two broad-decked steamers ply from shore to shore. From the southern landing we followed the long winding street of South Shields, a street rich in peculiarities of form and feature. You might fancy it the work of a builder who only knew how to build humble variations of the pitman's cottage, with here and there a better house put up by a later hand. I have often wondered what became of the toys, play-things, and rude simple pictures or engravings with which children amused themselves in my young days; but I wondered no longer, for here they all were in the little, unpretending shopwindows, migrated from the south to the north. Will they arrive some day at John o' Groat's?

At length we came to rows of real cottages, each apparently but one room, with sanded floor, but as clean as hands can make them. It is bread-baking

day, and every woman is busy with a goodly pile of loaves—nice, crisp, crusty loaves.

"That's the way our factory hands live hereabouts," says Dominus; "plenty of bread and plenty of meat."

It was a comfortable sight; abundant food, and troops of hearty children playing about while their fathers wrought in the foundries and mills and chemical works that make the whole region alive with labour.

Then we came to the new docks, which take a large slice out of Jarrow Slake, displacing shallow water and mud by spacious basins, into which ships drawing twenty-five feet will be able to enter; so at least says Dominus, who is full of information concerning all that we see. I thought that the sight of furlong after furlong of massive stone walls showing their whole height from base to cap around the empty excavations, gave one a truer idea of the magnitude of the works, than when seen filled with water and crowded with ships. Five great piers stretching out at right angles to the shore form the termination of five lines of railway which converge here from distant mines. Five ships can lay at each side of all the piers at once, ten ships to a pier; hence fifty ships may be loading at the same time. One feels amazed in thinking of the enormous quantities of coal that will be shipped here even in a single day. How the pitmen will sing!—

> "They tell us, my friend, there's coal at Wallsend,
> Can scarcely meet with a marrow;
> But let them come here, we'll make it appear
> Coals were not then wrought at Jarrow."

It was a long tramp round the deep curve of the Slake, but we came at last to East Jarrow. More smoke; more busy works and cottages. We are passing what

to Mr. Ruskin is an abomination—a dead wall—when Dominus, stopping at a gate, says,

"As you are upon sight-seeing, perhaps you would like to come in here?"

I followed him at once, for the thumping and roaring inside were quite sufficient to arouse my curiosity, and came suddenly upon a startling spectacle—ironworks in full activity. Large red-hot lumps that scorch the sultry air are drawn hurriedly from the furnaces on one side to the tireless machinery on the other, by men and boys who whistle and talk as if doing nothing extraordinary, while others run hither and thither with long fiery serpents. Ponderous rollers are sullenly rolling, cranks rattle, a huge mass, something like a crocodile's upper jaw made of iron, keeps on rising and falling upon a big anvil, as if impatient for something to devour; and the whole place resounds with clang, and crash, and uproar.

System and order prevail nevertheless, as we presently see, on watching the course of the operations. The door of one of the furnaces is opened; out shoots a stream of light intensely dazzling, and so hot that you shrink away from it as from the simoom of the desert. But the men thrust their large tongs into the glow, drag forth a heavy shapeless lump of iron at a white heat, toss it on a truck, and run with all speed to the "squeezer," as the crocodile's jaw is called. As they pass, you see that the lump is a slightly coherent mass of scrap iron, that is, clippings and waste cuttings of all sorts, except cast iron, which, tossed from the truck to the anvil, is speedily squeezed into a close compact block by the ponderous jaw. Away it goes forthwith to another furnace, while another lump is brought to the squeezer, and so that part of the process goes

merrily on. At the same time the blocks which are sufficiently advanced in their second heating are drawn out and carried as expeditiously to the rollers, through which they are passed and repassed, until what was a meré block has become a bar, some twelve feet long, four inches wide, and one inch thick. It is during the rolling that the resemblance to fiery serpents occurs; and I could not but admire the coolness, (if the word may be used in this case), with which the men and boys, grasping the ends with their tongs, passed the bars from groove to groove of the rollers, and brought them to the required dimensions ere the ruddy glow had all disappeared. To me, however, the labour seemed terrific, especially on a sunny day in July.

What with the squeezing and rolling, it might be thought that the scraps were sufficiently interwrought; but this factory has the reputation of turning out the best wrought iron on the Tyne, and for perfection of the quality there must be a further interworking of the substance. Let us see what takes place. Not far from the squeezer is fixed an equally powerful pair of shears, a large disc, of which the cutting edges form a radius. The upper section being made to rise and fall, a cutting action is produced, and the bars which we have just seen rolled are snipped into lengths of three feet as easily as if they were but pasteboard. Eight of these lengths are then piled one upon the other in readiness for another spell of purgatory, which they undergo in the largest furnace of all. Into this they are thrust with a peel, as loaves into a baker's oven, until the floor is fully charged, each pile of bars standing clear of the others, so that the quick flame of a coal fire may play freely over every part. The man who handles the peel is but a slim, middle-sized fellow,

and yet he gets through his work with surprising dexterity, half-naked and perspiring at every pore; for each pile of bars, which two men carry to the furnace-mouth, weighs a hundredweight. When business is brisk he can earn twelve shillings a day. As soon as the last pile was off the peel, he shut the furnace door, and ran out with two or three companions to get a drink.

In about eighty minutes the heating is complete; the bars seem ready to run one into the other, when they are drawn out; and no sooner is a pile passed through the first groove of the rollers than we see how their substance is pressed together and consolidated, and is at last wrought into a single bar of the required length and thickness; and thus a uniform and excellent quality of iron is produced. From the final groove the bars are dragged to a level part of the floor, where they are straightened and left to cool.

I had never before seen the rolling of iron on so large a scale, and therefore felt the more gratified by the interesting sight. To whom was I indebted for the favour, was but a natural question to ask? The answer showed that I had been dining, walking, and talking with one of the partners in a firm well-known on the Tyne.

From the noisy factory to the quiet church within a few minutes was a sudden contrast. The edifice stands not far from the margin of the Slake on a rise which overlooks the surrounding level. It is quite bare, exhibiting the signs of extreme age, unrelieved by creeping ivy—the dark green vesture in which antiquity becomes picturesque. Herein it partakes of the bare character of the landscape. Perhaps the original builders thought rigorous simplicity best suited for such a spot. Saxon and Norman have had

a hand in the architecture, all alike plain. The square tower rises midway where nave and chancel meet, and shows signs of decrepitude. On its eastern side remains the trace of a sharp angle, showing how high was the pitch of the former roof. Now the roof is almost flat, which is not an improvement, and the same may be said of some of the repairs here and there in the walls.

According to the dedication stone, which still exists rudely inscribed, the original church was founded in 681: probably a wooden building with thatched roof, which perished, as did so many others along the eastern coast, from the fire of the sea-roving Northmen. Of the present edifice the tower and chancel are believed to be about 900 years old: decidedly Ante-Norman, say some of the learned in such matters: the nave is an addition of later years, when the inevitable style was the churchwardenesque.

Adjoining the church on the south are some very ancient and much dilapidated walls, the remains of the conventual buildings founded by Venerable Bede. Among them we see simple round-headed doorways, supported by plain shafts and capitals; and one not round, but angular, formed of two flat stones leaning from each side to meet in the centre. A specimen of a truly primitive arch. The wall in which it appears is quite a picture: so old, the stones so rounded by time and weather, the joints so wasted, so rich in colour, and diversified by lights and shadows! The incumbent, whose house stands within, may feast his eye upon antiquity every time he looks from his window. For my part, I found much quiet pleasure in wandering about and poring into all the nooks and corners, scanning the ground for traces of foundations, or bits

of sculpture, peeping into the schoolroom, and moralising among the stones.

A woman—the clerk's wife, if I remember rightly—came from her little house which stands sheltered by the old walls, to unlock the church door. A little way within the entrance she showed me a large square stone as the stone on which Bede, the Venerable, loved to sit and meditate. It has not an old look: however, as in duty bound, I seated myself for a minute thereon. While walking up the nave, looking at the low and massive chancel arch, I cannot tell why, a profound emotion possessed me. Whether it was that the sight of that heavy unadorned curve brought the Past nearer to me, or that the vigorous incidents of trade and labour which I had witnessed during the hours just elapsed, made the contrast the more impressive, or that thoughts of the early days flitted across my mind —of the days when the weak first became strong by hearing of the Glad Tidings, and the bondman caught the whisper of a glorious freedom, and heard of One whose eye regarded alike the servant and his lord? I cannot tell. All this, perhaps, and more; but whatever may have been the occasion, certain it is that things great and magnificent have failed to stir the emotion which woke suddenly and with a thrill at sight of that simple arch.

Here was the birthplace of Bede, a Christian monk whose name is still held in respect and admiration. Here he lived from 672 to 735, learning in boyhood the lessons which in his manhood bore excellent fruit; teaching the brotherhood, fulfilling the offices of his religion, writing his *Ecclesiastical History*, and translating the Gospel into Anglo-Saxon. Even on his deathbed he continued his ministrations, and the fruit-

ful task which would give to thane and thrall the privilege of reading Scripture in their own tongue.

"Master, there is yet a verse," said the scribe who wrote down the translation of St. John's Gospel.

The holy man dictated a few words.

"Now it is finished," rejoined the scribe.

"Yes, *consummatum est*," answered Bede, in a faint voice, and presently died. They buried him here within the sacred precinct he loved so well; but a few years afterwards his corpse was removed to a vault in the cathedral of Durham. Later, came the rite of canonisation, and a place in the Romish calendar.

"He was a man," says William of Malmesbury, "who, although born in an extreme corner of the world, yet the light of his learning spread over all parts of the earth. All the hours which he had to spare from the monastic exercises of prayer, and singing in the choirs by day and night (in which he was constant and very devout), he most diligently spent in study, and divided his whole time between that and his devotions." And further, "with this man was buried almost all knowledge of history down to our times; inasmuch as there has been no Englishman either emulous of his pursuits, or a follower of his graces, who could continue the thread of his discourses now broken short."

Some of the seats in the chancel are admirable specimens of old carving; but the relic of relics is Bede's chair, which now stands in the corner within the Communion rails. Its form is primitive, identical with that of the chairs which we see in the illuminations of books representing the domestic life of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers: every part straight, flat, and clumsy, as if hewn out of the solid. It is, however, framed together strongly enough to last a thousand

years longer if properly cared for; and if silly and selfish visitors are kept from chipping pieces off to carry away as memorials. It has suffered much from their ruthless knives, especially on the two elbows; and was removed from the vestry to its present place near the altar purposely to stop the mischief. "They don't get the chance to cut little pieces off now," said the woman. The original paneling of the back is gone, and has been, and not long ago either, replaced by three thin oaken boards, rough and shabby, nailed across; but in such a way as can only be described by the technical term "botch." If I could have my will, the tinker who did that should be indicted for sacrilege. One would think that the sight alone of such a relic, black with the age of centuries—which, if tradition speak sooth, was already old when Alfred reigned, would have moved even a tinker to do his task lovingly.

"You're doing now what everybody does when they sees the chair," said the woman, as she saw me between the elbows on which—always, if tradition deceive not—Bede often rested his arms. "'Twould have been all the better for it if they had been satisfied with just sitting down." While agreeing with her in opinion, I could not help feeling that Bede, even if he used cushions, had not a particularly easy chair.

I saw no way up the tower inside the church, and was looking for one outside, when a gentleman, wearing a picturesque wide-awake, and a loose stay-at-home coat, yet of clerkly aspect withal, accosted me. I had seen him a few minutes before on the top of a ladder, inspecting the repair of the clerk's roof, and wondered who he was. He aided my search by pointing to a little door in the southern side of the tower, some feet

above the roof of a pent-house abutting thereupon. I ran and fetched the ladder, and presently scrambled in at the little door, and was half way up the ladder leading to the loft above, when he came scrambling after me. The interior looked desolate and neglected; the floor was sprinkled with a thin gray layer of guano from the birds that fly in and out at the open lights. The clerkly gentleman proved to be the Rev. J. M. Mason, incumbent of Jarrow, and very ready he was with information and explanations. He showed me where the tower was weakest; an arched door, now walled up, which formerly led into the chancel; an arch on the opposite side, opening to the nave; that there had probably been a rood-loft, which might now be contrived to receive an organ. In short, he explained the restorations recommended by Mr. Scott, the architect, who had made a careful survey of the church, and drawn up a report. To make a satisfactory restoration, and open the ancient door, and the windows in the chancel which have been stopped for centuries, and enlarge the nave, would cost about 1500*l*. Circulars had been issued, explaining that the parish stood in need of more sittings, and inviting subscriptions; but the result was so inadequate that Mr. Mason lost heart, and had to bear, as best he might, the thought that some day the failing tower will yield to a south-westerly storm. I counselled him to try again; and promised to give a guinea whenever he could assure me that the work was really begun; and I shall not greatly err in believing that between Jarrow and Jermyn Street there will be found antiquaries enough, holding antiquity in affection, to contribute as many guineas as will suffice to rescue Bede's church, and preserve it for many an age to come.

In the upper loft hang two small bells, which have the ancient feature in perfection. I never before saw metal so closely resembling splintered and worm-eaten wood as do the two clappers. Upon one of the bells appears the inscription, *Sanctæ Paulæ ora pro nobis.*

The view from the tower, taking in so much of what has been described, and more, is noteworthy. On one side the Slake, with its border of smoky workshops, and shipping in the distance, and boats and keels scattered here and there: so changed since King Egfrid had his port there, that he would not know the place, could he come to life again. Carrying the eye inland, we see the low road along the margin, which is sometimes flooded at high tides; and within that a swampy-looking flat, across which flows a small stream, with frequent curves, and this is backed by green pastures, rising with gentle undulations to the horizon, but encroached on by smoke, and railways, and black chimneys, as if trade begrudged the space occupied by verdure. On the other side you see portions of the village, a good house or two, a few trees, smoke and chimneys enough and to spare, and hills and hummocks created out of ballast. The largest advances upon a green hollow, which, in a few years, will be filled up, and buried beneath the mountain of gravel. The trains are now running upon it, bringing the ballast a mile or more from the ships in the river. When the allotted space shall be filled up, the contractors will have to cover the whole of the now bare and brown surface with green turf, so as to produce herbage. What the result will be is already shown by the grazing of cattle on the hummocks which have been covered long enough to become pasture. It seemed to me, that to have a hill growing up, day after day, to hem

one in and narrow the view, would be intolerable; but Mr. Mason regarded it with edifying good temper; indeed, he thought there would be something pleasant in the sight of a green bank. Will those ballast-heaps puzzle future geologists? Will the science of a thousand years hence be able to account for the presence of gravel and stones from Sweden, from France, from Spain, from the western shores of England, from beyond the Atlantic, all mingled and deposited in one heap on the banks of the Tyne? Before that time shipbuilders will doubtless have found a less cumbersome, wasteful, and expensive mode of ballasting ships than the present.

I shook hands with the friendly clergyman, and walked along the edge of the Slake, the nearest way to the river at Jarrow Point. The ferryman, saying that he never rowed when the wind would save him the trouble, hoisted his sail, and soon landed me on the rough wall of the Northumberland dock.

"That 's no Tyne watter, that 's Tees watter," said a miner who, while crossing hereabouts, dipped his finger into the river, and tasted the water, thereby provoking the laughter of his companions. He stuck to his word; they argued, and at last laid a wager that the thing was impossible. Thereupon the miner, who had worked on Crossfell, and knew of the cutting by which Tees could be diverted into Tyne, showed that the thing was not impossible, and as the story runs, won his wager.

From the dock I pursued the route along the water's edge to Shields; a route muddy, spongy, slimy, stony, and coaly, full of ins and outs and ups and downs, running under staithes and jetties, crossing yards pervaded by the smell of pitch and tar, and in the rear of

miserable tenements where the children hold a perpetual carnival with dirt. An hour of such a walk as that was quite enough. Then into the narrow busy street once more, picking up my knapsack in passing at the eating-house, and on, still near the river, towards Tynemouth. At a house on the way, where I thought to gather information only, I was gladdened by getting cordial hospitality besides: a good cup of tea forthwith by way of earnest. Then the worthy Friend (I am not quite sure if he will like to be called Quaker) would accompany me in a stroll before sunset.

Tynemouth, as its name purports, stands at the very mouth of the river, on a lofty cliff, whence you may behold a wide prospect over land and sea. Remembering my walk of the year foregoing, it was with pleasure that I saw beyond a long range of the Durham coast, the massive form of Huntcliff Nab—grandest of Yorkshire cliffs. Northwards, the shore lies low, stretching away in dark blue irregular outline to Newbiggin and points yet more distant. We shall make closer acquaintance with it ere many days be over, and find something to interest us, notwithstanding that afar off it looks tame. We can see Cullercoats, a well-known fishing-village about three miles distant, and more than one historic site in the landscape behind. There is Monk's Farm, and near it the old stone on which antiquaries pretend to make out the inscription—

> "O, herrid deed!
> To kill a man for a pigges hede."

Wherein is preserved, as they say, the memory of a monk, who, carrying off a pig without leave to his cell, was pursued and slain by the owner.

Looking down at the river we see where, indicated

by the broken water, lurk the Black Middens, a bed of rocks fatal to many a gallant ship. On the Durham side spreads the Herd Sand, dreaded by the mariner. Below us lies the Prior's Haven. And there are the works in progress for deepening the channel, and rendering it less dangerous of access in stormy weather—a long stone pier on each side, running out into the sea, as yet far from completion. The story goes, that the contractor having discovered stone by boring within the point, offered to plan his excavations so as to isolate, and thereby strengthen, the military dépôt, in return for permission to dig on that spot. Permission was given; he dug and dug till he made a gap as wide and deep as a railway cutting, but to his surprise and vexation met with no stone. Where he thought to get material for the pier he got nothing but earth; and people seemed inclined to make merry over his mistake, and much more so when he discovered that he had been misled by making his first exploratory boring immediately upon the remains of an old long-buried stone wall. However, the excavation remains, and should the need arise, may prove useful as a defence.

Upon the corner thus isolated stand the barracks, the military works, the lighthouse, the church, and the ruins of Tynemouth Priory. These last are the chief attraction, for they combine a commanding situation with beauty of architecture and picturesqueness of effect. The site has been sacred for many generations. Oswald, the first Christian king of Northumbria, built a monastery here. Three times was it plundered and burnt by the Danes; at length, in the reign of Edward the Confessor, Earl Tonstal rebuilt and dedicated it to St. Mary and St. Oswin, the bones of the latter

having been discovered among the ruins. In the troubles that befell after the Conquest a fortress was built within its precincts, and the monks had unwelcome neighbours in the lawless men-at-arms quartered therein. And so it went on, the works of prayer interrupted from time to time by the noise of war, until the priory shared the fate of all other religious houses. Later, the site was granted to Dudley Duke of Northumberland; but on his attainder, it reverted to the Crown. In the great struggle between king and people, Tynemouth Castle, as it was called, was again put into a state of defence, and underwent a siege and capture by the Scots. Then it was strengthened and garrisoned by the Parliament, and Colonel Lilburn appointed governor. He, however, having declared for the King, Sir Arthur Haslerigg marched from Newcastle, stormed the fort, and cut down all opposition. Lilburn's head was stuck aloft on a pole, as a warning to the faithless.

From what remains of the ruin with its tall and graceful arches, some round, some pointed, and all richly red in colour, we can mentally rebuild the priory, and imagine its former pride and magnificence. Spoliation more than Time is to blame for the deplorable dilapidations; and it seems something like a mockery that the authorities should write up a warning to the mischievous, while the governor's house still stands but a few yards distant, a very model of ugliness, built of stone taken from the ancient walls. Looking thereon, you will wonder how the builder could ever convert that which was already beautiful into anything so unsightly. If it is left standing as a foil to the architectural graces of the ruin, the purpose is fully answered.

A considerable portion of the choir remains, and is fitted up as a church. At the eastern end stands a small old edifice which might be taken for a chapel or oratory: it is St. Oswin's shrine, a venerable relic, with stained glass windows, niches, and groins and carved bosses in the ceiling; all looking the better for the careful restoration which it has recently undergone at the cost of the Duke of Northumberland. And all around spreads the churchyard, covered with rank grass, and thickly heaped with graves.

Tynemouth is an open breezy place, abounding in lodging-houses, for it is much frequented by folk from Newcastle, especially on Sundays. To them, being only ten miles distant, it is an agreeable retreat where they can breathe air uncontaminated by smoke. The new streets and terraces that cross the heights towards the sea, indicate a growing love of healthful habitation.

CHAPTER X.

To Earsden—The Duke's Mining-agent—Plan of a Coal-pit—Blackness and Verdure—The School—Old Robert—The Pit-mouth—Down into the Darkness—Faintness, Blindness, Bewilderment—Noises—Begin to see—Shaft and Tunnel—A Walk Underground—Coal-trains—Dismal Doorkeepers—Aspects of the Mine—The Breathing Apparatus—The Broken—The Hewer—The Bonny Pit Laddie—The Trouble—Two Miles Underground—Fuel for Fifteen-hundred Years—Warning to Cock-fighters—A Remonstrance—There's no harm in Quoits—The Question of Questions—The Group round the Coal-wagon—A Sigh for Answer—Strata and Seams—The deepest Pit—A Hopeful Boy; A Thoughtful Man—The Stable—The Furnace—Up to the Sunshine.

A FEW miles along the Blyth and Tyne railway, and a short walk between wheatfields, brought me the next morning to the village of Earsden. Here we are to the eastward of the smoke, and among rural objects; but not out of sight of smoking chimneys and coal-pits. There they rise, ever blacker towards the west.

At Earsden I called on Mr. T. J. Taylor, the Duke of Northumberland's mining-agent, and acquainted him with my wish to descend into a coal-pit. Though but short notice, he very kindly assented, and summoning one of his surveyors, instructed him to conduct me to East Holywell pit, and hand me over to the care of a certain viewer. But before starting, the plan of the pit was brought out, that I might have all needful explanation as to its extent and ramifications, and I was made aware that the situation and scope of the workings are as well known on the surface to the surveyors, as underground, and that even underground

the boundaries of the pit are accurately maintained; a thick, solid wall of coal or rock, which can only be pierced by special agreement. Were these boundaries not maintained, it would often happen that the water of one royalty would flow into and flood another.

We walked across fields about a mile to the pit, which, with its machinery, and tramways, and great heaps of coal, and small cottages, and black features generally, presents a marked contrast to hedgerows and fields of grain. The cottages are in the usual style of pitmen's dwellings; the offices stand apart, and near them is the Infant schoolroom, a clean and well-kept building, where seventy children receive instruction. Here I was introduced to Old Robert the viewer; a grave, serious-minded man, who spoke about the school in a way that showed how much he had its welfare at heart. He was himself a teacher in the Sunday school, and had long been of opinion that if pitmen are to be made sober and respectable, the way is to begin early enough with the children. Moreover, he had been a teetotaller for twenty years, and found every year more and more reason for thankfulness therein.

The office was to be my dressing-room, and there I put on a pitman's suit of coarse blue woollen, and was soon ready for the descent. The mouth of a pit in work is always a busy scene, owing to the rapidity with which the coal is hauled up and hurried away to the shoots or wagons; and here the laden trains and the already large heaps were growing every minute longer and larger with the supplies brought from underground. Holywell is not a large pit, and yet it was sending up four hundred tons of coal a day.

Up came the cage with its burden; then Old Robert,

bidding the brakesman pause, placed me on one side of the cage, himself on the other, told me to take hold of the bar that crossed between as a basket-handle, and —down we shot into the darkness and a depth of forty-eight fathoms. I felt a sensation as if about to faint, and thought it the result of want of practice; but speaking of it afterwards to the surveyor, he described himself as subject to the same faintness every time he goes down. The sudden deprivation of light was painful, and the more so in going from the full blaze of a July sun; and when the cage touched the bottom I could see nothing but what looked like two torches flaring in the distance, and the sense of bewilderment was increased by noisy cavernous rumblings, the hurried heavy tread of horses and shouts of boys. Old Robert spoke a word to some one whom I could not see; a rough hand took one of mine; I stepped from the cage and was led across a tramway to a wooden bench, and bidden to sit down. Then the noises multiplied by the shoving of wagons into the cage, and by the crash and shock with which the heavy machine descended, almost, as it seemed, before it could have risen to the top; and from far away in the darkness on the right, there came one heavy thunderous rumble after another; light twinkled from time to time in that dismal region, and ere I had ceased to wonder whether it was miles distant, up rolled another train of wagons, with a lantern hung on the foremost, and the boy alighting, unhooked the horse and led him away into gloom on the left.

Presently Old Robert said, perhaps imagining my thoughts, "I can't see a bit better than you can, at first; but I know where we are, and what it all means."

When we had sat about ten minutes, I began to see,

but very dimly, that we were seated at one side of a great tunnel-like excavation stretching to unknown distances to the right and left, opening immediately in front of us upon the foot of the shaft, and containing a tramway, along which the wagons were drawn, and pushed to the cage. Above my head, fixed to the black wall of shale or stone, whichever it might be, hung two flaring oil-lamps, the torches which I had fancied far off; and by their light the man Jem, who had led me from the cage, was working bravely at his task of sending up coal. I could see a constant stream of smoke creeping to the shaft, and there passing up as through a chimney; for mines must breathe, and if pure air is drawn in at one shaft, foul air is discharged at another by the heated current of a furnace; and it was through the smoky stream of the upcast shaft that we had descended.

Long before my eyes were accustomed to the gloom, Old Robert gave me a lighted candle, stuck in what looked like a wooden battledore, took another himself, and led the way along the black cavern on the right, stepping confidently on where I trod with hesitation. I had to stand still when the wagons rumbled past, and shrink close to the wall, and make myself as small as possible, so dreadful did they seem to me in my ignorance of the route and my doubtful vision. Robert, holding his candle over the train as it passed, discovered many a breach of rules; that is, men lying on the wagons to save themselves the trouble of walking. They did not expect to meet him at that time of day. Once or twice he commanded a halt, and reproved the offenders; but it seemed to me that the temptation to ride to and from one's work, in such a place must be irresistible; and I am not clear that I should try to resist it were I a pitman.

At times we came to a wooden partition built all across the passage, which carries a door, hung so as to keep itself constantly shut. Behind each of these doors sits a boy to pull the string when men or wagons approach, and he lets the door fall to again as soon as they have passed. Neglect of duty might occasion an interruption in the ventilation, and endanger the mine. But what a life, to sit there in awful darkness for long weary hours day after day! How can the boys employ their thoughts? Do they think at all? Were I condemned to that duty, I think it more than probable, that when my turn came to go up to the sunshine, I should prefer cock-fighting to any other recreation.

At last I could see, and our candles really did appear to give light. We had come along the main level or thoroughfare of the mine, where men and horses can walk without stooping; a gloomy way, yawning widely here and there into huge caverns the extent of which we were unable to discern, and these, as Robert explains, are abandoned workings. In some places the roof rises high into the darkness where masses have fallen; and stout timbers are set up to give support, or a strong stone wall is built up, making you aware of strenuous measures for safety. In some places roof and walls are firm and compact, and there is no more than room for a man between the wall and the tramway; in others there are great gaps on each side half filled with fallen rubbish. And there are places, as Old Robert stopped to show me, where air-channels tightly constructed of wood pass across the way overhead; and by the manner of their construction you can see how sedulously the respiration of the mine is cared for.

By-and-by we turned from the main way into a branch level, narrow and low, where you cannot stand

upright, and where ponies and not horses draw the wagons. Following this we came to "the broken;" that is, the place where hewing was going on, where in all directions you saw what appeared to be large black chambers and branching passages. Loose heaps of coal lay about, from which men and boys were loading the wagons, and the ponies drew off one short train after another, along the crooked and uneven tram to the main way. It surprised me somewhat to hear old Robert give orders to the boys to go here and there, to stop at such and such a place, and their reply showing how well they understood what was to me a bewildering maze.

The hewer sits on his haunches and dislodges large lumps by the aid of his pick, or he bores a hole and loosens a mass by gunpowder. At intervals he leaves a huge square pillar to support the roof, and when these have served their purpose long enough he digs them away also, and the roof sinks down with the pressure from above, and the disembowelled place becomes a goaf or abandoned working.

No wonder that miners strike for good wages; no wonder that they maintain their strength with beef and mutton, and regale themselves with "singing-hinnies" —fat cakes baked on a griddle—on all fit occasions. Whatever may be their habits above ground, they are sober enough in the pit, where their only drink is water, milk, or tea. They have a strange appearance as they sit using their pick, black as imps of darkness in the feeble light. Yet what says the song?—

"The bonny pit laddie, the canny pit laddie,
The bonny pit laddie for me, O!
He sits in his hole as black as a coal,
And brings the white siller to me, O!

The bonny pit laddie, the canny pit laddie,
The bonny pit laddie for me, O !
He sits in his cracket, and hews in his jacket,
And brings the white siller to me, O !"

Robert led me across the loose heaps to the extremity of the hewing that I might see "the trouble" which there stopped it. This was the intrusion of a ridge or dyke of basalt, from which the pick rebounds as from hard metal, crossing the seam of coal like a wall. A trouble, in every sense of the word; for it mostly happens where a seam is cut in two by a wedge of basalt, that the range is broken, so that if the basalt be pierced, the coal is not found pursuing the same level, but must be sought for some feet lower. By holding my candle close to the rock, I could see that wherever the coal came in contact with the basalt it had the charred cindery appearance which would be produced by intense heat in the intruded vein.

We had now travelled about two miles. Old Robert said he could take me more than as far again if I liked; but there was nothing more to be seen than what I had seen, and nothing to be gained by a long tramp in gloomy passages which led only to similar workings. So I declared myself satisfied: I had seen the ways and means by which this northern coalfield has been ransacked, and will continue to be ransacked perhaps for five hundred years more; and we need not forebode want of fires even then, for geologists tell us that the coalfield of South Wales contains enough to supply our wants for twice five hundred years.

Old Robert took the opportunity to question two of the boys who were passing; one of his under-men

hearing the talk drew near, and there we stood leaning on a laden wagon, our two candles standing on the lumps of coal, the black roof pressing closely down above us, the walls shutting us closely in on both sides. There we stood while the worthy viewer relieved his heart by an examination.

"Well, Jack, how lang wast thee at day-school?"

"Mebbie eighteen months."

"Look at that, noo Jack: eighteen months at school, and years at cock-fightin'. Canst read? canst figure?"

"No muckle."

"Thee speaks truth there, Jack, 'tis no muckle. Thee canst do better at cock-fightin' and quoits, eh, Jack?"

Jack and his companion grinned, and made demonstrations that they would like to be off; but Old Robert improved the occasion in his rough homely way, and warned them of the consequences of quoits and cock-fighting. While he was speaking a big boy came up and would have passed on, but he too was detained with "Look here now; here's a boy lately set on to do man's work, and getting man's wages, and what must he do but go with the men in all their wickedness! What's to become o' thee, Bill?"

Bill grinned in his turn and hurried away, and Old Robert exhorted the other two to take warning by him, when the underman interposed and said, "Thee's too hard on the boys, Robert. There's no harm in quoits. It's a game I've played at many a time myself, and never felt the worse. If ye want to do good to the lads ye should give 'em less time in the pit. Look at them two, now, they've been down here ever since five o'clock this morning; and when they've worked down

here twelve hours, then they go up again. What would ye have the lads to do after twelve hours in the pit? What can they do, Robert, if they don't take to the quoits?"

I listened, hoping that the question which has so long baffled philosophers would then and there receive a rough and ready solution: that a way, desirable to the rudest capacity would be shown, to divert the throng from that broad highway which leadeth—ah! whither? which is so delicious, and so fatal; which entices alike millionnaires and miners. And while listening I wished for the ready pencil that could have taken a sketch of the group, as we stood there leaning upon the wagon: the two men with broad-brimmed round-crowned hats; the two boys just tall enough to show their heads above the lumps of coal, their teeth and eyes glistening in the candle-light in strange contrast with their black faces, and looking from one to the other with a wicked expression; the black roof and walls shutting us in—a dimly-lighted group in a vast darkness.

Old Robert looked at me, looked at his mate, looked at the boys; shook his head sadly; breathed out a hoarse sigh; but said nothing. And I, who hoped to hear in the sunless mine the answer which philosophers have been unable to give satisfactorily in the sunshine, was disappointed.

As we retraced our steps, Old Robert took pains to show me that the huge pillars are left at regular intervals, so that the mine thereabouts might have been likened to streets bordered by rows of detached blocks; and wherever coal was to be brought out, there ran a branch from the tramway. Here the seam had been thick and profitable. Commonly, in sinking

a pit in these parts, clay is first met with; then sandstone; then perhaps a seam of coal about six inches thick; then more sandstone and shale intermixed with thin seams of coal; and under these lies the great bed or seam of coal, known as the High Main: it is that from which most of the coal is got in the valley of the Tyne. In some places it is six or eight feet thick; in others it proves capricious and disappears without any assignable cause. Below the High Main, there is a repetition of the sandstone and shale, in some places five hundred feet thick, and under that is found the Low Main, a seam from two to three feet thick. There are places where the High Main lies within fifty feet of the surface; others, where it lies twelve hundred feet below. This northern coalfield extends from the Tees to the Coquet, about fifty-five miles; and the deepest mine within it is on the banks of the Wear, near Sunderland, which is sunk to the depth of fifteen hundred and ninety feet—more than a quarter-mile—and pierces altogether forty feet of coal.

Holywell pit, as before observed, is forty-eight fathoms deep: nowhere did I find the temperature disagreeable; and as no explosive gas has yet been met with, naked candles can be used in all the workings. The absence of gas is, however, a sign of inferior quality in the coal; hence the best coal is the most dangerous to the miner.

We met a small boy travelling along all alone, and at sight of him Old Robert brightened up a little. "Ha! that was a good lad. A little one, truly; but in love with school, fond of his book, a first-rate reader, and able to work out a sum in Vulgar Fractions. Ha! if all the lads in the mine were but such as he! but his father takes a deal of pains with him."

Then we came up to an elderly man, who was mending the roadway, an accident having incapacitated him for other work, and he also was a hopeful subject. Old Robert had a word of encouragement for him; for here was one who, having trained his own boys up to cock-fighting, now began to see that he had made a mistake, and to discover that life has a significance beyond mere food and raiment, or merrymaking and labour. Well for him that he has had a friend at hand to build him up in steadfastness, or a kind neighbour to read to him occasionally, that is his greatest comfort; for, as he said to me, "I canna make much oot o' the readin' mysel'."

When we emerged into the main way, and came once more to the foot of the shaft, everything looked so distinct, that there seemed something absurd in the recollection of the blindness and bewilderment that troubled the commencement of my plunge. We passed the shaft, and turned into a recess behind the wall where the two lamps hung, and there I saw the furnace fire; a great glowing heap of coal, big enough to roast a couple of oxen, which maintains a rapid and steady current of air from the mine, and is kept burning night and day. A little farther, and I saw the stables where—at a guess—some thirty or forty horses and ponies are comfortably lodged, with stalls and manger and plenty to eat. This was the warmest part of the mine—that is, which I had seen; and even here the temperature was not oppressive, for the ventilation is not overtaxed by neglect of cleanliness.

Then we went back to the shaft, stepped into the cage, and shot up into the glorious sunshine. The surveyor had calculated the time of my re-appearance—we had been underground about three hours—and was

waiting for me: water and towels were placed ready in the office, and a few minutes sufficed for the removal of my coaly husk. I shook hands with Old Robert; begged him to send me a word now and then about the Infant School, and walked back to Earsden, where Mr. Taylor rounded off his favours in my behalf, by the hospitable rite of a dinner.

CHAPTER XI.

Walking Northwards—Seaton Delaval—Hartley—Seaton Sluice—A Curious Port—An Honest Place—The Sea-beach—Sand-hoppers—A Feast for Curlews—Gull-shooters—Beautiful eating—Sand-hills—Blyth—Great Coal Trade—Camboise—The Wansbeck—The Links—Newbiggin—Night by the Sea—The Village by Daylight—The Church on the Point—Epitaphs—Aspects of the Shore—Snab Point—Druridge Bay—Skeleton of a Whale—Inside a Whale's Mouth—Cresswell Sands—A Walk on the Links—Flowers—Coquet Island—Cottage Philosophy—Hampshire *versus* Northumberland—Amble—More Coal Trade—Warkworth—A Friendly Surprise—The Castle—Glimpses of the Past—The Charming Coquet—The Hermitage.

LATE in the afternoon I took up my knapsack and walked away northwards by a winding road between wheatfields and wild roses, where we see at once a specimen of the fertile strip of level land, from four to six miles in width, which Northumberland has for its seaward margin. But we shall find it here and there broached by quarries and traversed by industry and enterprise. About a mile inland appears Seaton Delaval—a house built by Vanbrugh, half hidden by woods; and presently we come to Hartley, a pitman's village; the usual low pantiled cottages, but all so clean that to look at them is a pleasure. It is Saturday afternoon, and some of the women are giving the finishing touch to the cleanliness by sweeping the pathways. And now the smoking glasshouses of Seaton appear in the view, and the refreshing saline breath of the sea salutes our nostrils.

Then to Seaton, or Seaton Sluice, as it is called; a village on the cliff, traversed by colliery railways that

lead to staithes; a chilly-looking place of low red-roofed houses; an octagonal stone tower, built for a coal-office, now used as a news-room; a long and a short pier, forming a small harbour at the mouth of a burn; a rough stony point bearing a flagstaff, and sandhills beyond. As a port it shows us what enterprise could accomplish two centuries ago: we see a passage cut fifty feet down into the solid sandstone cliff, to form a second entrance to the harbour, useful in blowing weather when the other is unavailable. The piers, we read, had been washed away sundry times, till Charles II. appointed Sir Ralph Delaval collector and surveyor of his own port, and "no officer to meddle with him;" and the knight built piers and kept them together with heart of oak dovetails, and cut a sluice and made a back-water which washed out the channel "as clean as a marble table, and so he reaped the fruits of his great cost and invention; and if, in the whole, the profit did not answer the account, the pleasure of designing and executing, which is the most exquisite of any, did it."

"We calls it the gut," said an old blue-jacket to whom I addressed a remark: "ships lay in there, and load coal under the shoot." The seaward end is closed by booms or balks of timber, sliding in a groove after the manner of a portcullis; and in heavy gales a double set is let down for greater security. You see the crane by which they are lowered standing on the cliff above. I asked blue-jacket if the old brick tower against which he leant was a prison:—"Na, there's no thieves here: it's a vawy honest place."

Glad I was at length to set foot on the beach, to hear the full roar of the breakers, to feel the light drops of spray on my cheek, wafted from the hissing surge. I could fancy that every wave as it came rolling in,

brought a new throb of life to the shore: life from every zone, whereof all who will may partake.

The pier of Blyth stretches out before us darkly into the water; and beyond, darker and farther, stretches Newbiggin Point, marked by a church that looks dark also, and massive against the evening sky. The smooth beach is alive with sand-hoppers, swarming in such amazing numbers that as they hop they present the appearance of a pale brown cloud. It is impossible to avoid treading on them, and scores are laid to rest with every footfall. And how they congregate on the heaps and scraps of weed! You can shake them out by hundreds of thousands. The curlews on the inland moors know when sand-hoppers are in season, and come down to the shore and devour them greedily.

I overtook a man who, having shot a gull, was trying to decoy other gulls within reach of his piece; but the creatures would not be tempted. I asked him what was the use of killing such birds as those. "What's the use?" he replied, with a chuckle; "why, a young gull like this is beautiful eating. All you've got to do is to pull off the feathers, wrap the bird in a cloth, and bury it underground for twenty-four hours. All the fishy taste goes away, and it comes out beautiful." Another man whom I passed, told me he had been squatting on his heap of damp seaweed for two hours, in the hope of shooting a gull; but in vain.

There is no cliff here. The Northumbrian coast-line for leagues is nothing but a ragged range of sand-hills, patched with coarse reedy grass, or blown into smooth pale drifts. It is toilsome work where you have to walk close along their base. In the rear of these hills, and on the river of the same name, stands the town of Blyth; not by any means a pretty place,

though if a crowd of staithes and ships are a sign, it may be profitable; and, indeed, it sends away more than 200,000 tons of coal a year. Besides the staithes you may see a *Pilots' Office*, where a few weather-beaten blue-jackets pace up and down, making diligent use of a weather-beaten telescope. The pier, built partly of stone and wood, extends into the sea for nearly a mile; and "ought to go as far again," says one of the men, "to be of any use."

I crossed by the ferry, and continued along the beach to Camboise—Cammis, the natives call it—at the mouth of the Wansbeck; a place of two or three cottages and an inn. It was nine o'clock, and I thought to rest there; but the *Ridley Arms* was already choked with guests who had come down from Morpeth to bathe and pass the Sunday; so I went forwards to the ferry, and travelled on to Newbiggin, taking the track across the links.

At the ferry the Wansbeck is tame enough; but walk up the stream, and you find it flowing in a deep vale, between wooded precipitous banks, where pleasant paths curve along the margin. About four miles up you come to the ruin of Bothal Castle, in a pretty landscape; it is a league further to the old town of Morpeth, and beyond that there are the ruins of Mitford Castle, and the site of Newminster Abbey—an offshoot from Fountains. I remembered my walks of former years and the cheerfulness that the vale inspires, and the pleasurable emotions with which Akenside sings:—

> "O, ye Northumbrian shades, which overlook
> The rocky pavement and the mossy falls
> Of solitary Wansbeck's limpid stream."

Twilight crept on as I paced onwards, descending at times into a hollow thickly overgrown with ferns, or

crossing levels adorned with a plentiful crop of ragwort, or "yellow-top" as the folk hereabouts call it. The head inn at Newbiggin was in the same state of repletion as the house at Camboise, and the landlord for some reason could scarcely tell me so with civility. He being, as I was told, a man from the south, ought to have known better. Luckily *The Dolphin*, on the opposite side of the way, though an awkwardly-contrived house, had a chamber to spare, and good entertainment withal.

Night drew on, solemnised by nearness of the sea. As the sound of that measured roll and plunge of the waves upon the land ascends to the ear, softened by distance, it is as if the Infinite were manifesting itself audibly; and Night, hushing all meaner sounds, unveils star after star in the firmament, while plunge succeeds to plunge with ceaseless murmur.

Newbiggin Point is a pleasant place on a fine breezy morning; not that the landscape is beautiful, but that sunshine imparts to it the charm which a happy heart bestows on the countenance. You see a bay bordered by low irregular sandstone cliffs; a margin of links, shaggy and uneven, terminating abruptly upon the cliffs, or sloping down in hollows to the beach; and in the rear of the links the village, presenting a respectable frontage to the sea, with many modern houses, built for the accommodation of summer visitors. A considerable number of boats are scattered about on the links, painted in the brightest of blue, green, and red. In the village I saw a blue doorstep with a white border. Nets are hanging out to dry; and you will discover the picturesque touches which belong to a fishing village.

Modest as it now looks, Newbiggin has been a place of importance in its day; it had a pier in the olden time; it equipped a ship for Edward the Second's fleet, on his invasion of Scotland; and its bailiff was summoned, together with the bailiffs of Newcastle, Hull, and Lynn, to the council held for affairs of state at Warwick, in 1337.

And while sitting here on the churchyard wall, we may entertain ourselves with story as well as history, and imagine ourselves among that gentle party on the galley's deck—

> "And now the vessel skirts the strand,
> Of mountainous Northumberland;
> Towns, towers, and halls successive rise,
> And catch the nuns' delighted eyes.
> Monk Wearmouth soon behind them lay,
> And Tynemouth's priory and bay;
> They mark'd, amid her trees, the hall
> Of lofty Seaton-Delaval;
> They saw the Blyth and Wansbeck floods
> Rush to the sea through sounding woods;
> They pass'd the tower of Widderington,
> Mother of many a valiant son;
> At Coquet Isle their beads they tell
> To the good Saint who own'd the cell;
> Then did the Aln attention claim,
> And Warkworth, proud of Percy's name;
> And next they cross'd themselves, to hear
> The whitening breakers sound so near,
> Where, boiling through the rocks, they roar
> On Dunstanborough's cavern'd shore."

The church stands near enough to the extremity of the Point to feel the spray in stormy weather. Six worn, carved tombs, built into the wall of the porch, remain as relics of the olden time. Lowly graves fill the churchyard, and here as elsewhere the departed must not be forgotten, and their names are graven on stone for younger generations to read. One of the epitaphs

struck me as remarkable: a young girl is likened to a rosebud nipped by frost and disease, and in the third stanza the writer explains—

> "But ruthless still, it raged the more
> Her little heart (convulsed and tore),
> It larger grew with pain;
> It heaved, it beat, it fluttered sore,
> At length it sunk to heave no more,
> To heave no more in pain."

On the reverse of the same stone appears—

> "Tho' infant years no pompous honours claim,
> The vain parade of an immortal fame;
> To be their praise, the last great day shall rear,
> The spotless innocents that sleepeth here."

From Newbiggin onwards the coast tries you with broad levels of weedy rock, with broad slopes of sand; here and there a rough point, and morsels of cliff, stony or shaly, topped by sand-drifts and ragged grass, and here and there a rocky reef for the breakers to tumble on; or a stone quarry yawns unexpectedly, with a few scrubby trees about it, and a deep pool in the bottom; or a brook runs across the sand, and you may cool your feet in walking through; or scores of cattle, finding it hot on the links behind the sand-hills, congregate on the beach, and thrust their noses into the soft damp sand. Here and there troops of rustics are bathing with shout and laughter, getting themselves clean before church-time.

About an hour's walking brings us to Snab Point: hence the view opens to the northwards. Coquet Island appears with its white lighthouse shining brightly in the sun. Druridge Bay stretches before us; we come to a good road running between the beach and large plantations which conceal Cresswell Hall, and shelter

an old square tower that peers above the foliage. A well stocked-garden by the wayside here is a novel and pleasing sight; a man who was pacing up and down the paths, invited me in; and, pointing to a cromlech erected on a low mound, told me it was the memorial of a wreck. But there was something better worth seeing than that; and he led the way to an avenue in the plantation, where, on a pedestal surrounded by rhododendrons and elders, lie the bones of a whale. Some twenty years ago, as he related, a whale eighty feet long was found floundering in a creek between two estates. The proprietor on each side claimed the prize; but while they disputed for possession, Government stepped in, carried off the blubber, and bone, and ivory, and left the skeleton and refuse for the disputants. Though grizzled and cracked by exposure to the weather, the bones surprise you as to the prodigious size of the monster that once owned them; there are vertebræ full fifteen inches in diameter. "Get into the head," said the man; "it 'll be something for ye to go home and say ye have been inside a whale's mouth." There was plenty of room, and I could have crawled through the gullet.

The public-house here has the Cresswell Arms for sign, with the motto *Cressa ne careat;* and feels proud during the summer, for hither also come bathers and visitors from Morpeth, and other places inland. And now we come upon Cresswell sands, which, for smoothness and extent, rival the shore of Redcar, and all we have to do is to walk and be happy.

After a few miles along the sands, I by way of change took a turn on the links. On the inner slope of the sand-hills the surface is rough, with coarse reedy grass sliding

in places beneath your tread, and walking is something like wading. But this rough territory is thickly colonised by rabbits; many a one darts hurriedly away, scared by the harsh rustling of the intruder. But as you leave the foot of the hills, the coarse reedy grass merges into a belt of ragwort and coarse meadow plants, dotted with pretty flowers, and that broadens away and blends with verdure, where the grass is short and sweet, and cattle are grazing. It will gladden your heart to see how Nature beautifies even this rough sandy sea-border with the rich hue of the bloody crane's-bill, the graceful pea-like pink blossoms of the rest-harrow, the purple star of the self-heal, while the ladies' bedstraw rivals the ragwort in brilliance, and your eye is dazzled by the yellow patches. And if you incline for half-an-hour's rest, you may choose a couch warm and dry, and decorated beyond the reach of upholstery.

For the moment I preferred a seat on the top of one of the highest hills, whence Tynemouth is visible, and the intervening points, and the castle of Warkworth on a bold height in the north-west, and Coquet Island about a mile from the shore, and masts rising in the port of Amble. The island, which looks low and level, as a piece detached from the links, was once the abode of monks, and the ruin of their cell, a mere fragment, yet remains to testify of their existence. The present recluses are the lighthouse keepers; but they can hardly be called solitary in a place thickly populated by rabbits. Turn from the sea and look inland, and you will observe how the links slide off into pastures and farms, which look poor for want of trees; and how the cultivated breadth of level land swells up at length into the low hills which, rising higher and higher, appear

far off in the wild moors and bleak fells of the centre of the county.

Feeling thirsty, I begged a draught of water at a cottage. It was cheerfully given by a woman who told me that water was scarce, owing to the long drought: the spring near the house had dried up, and now her husband had to go a mile twice a day to fetch water. Some people were beginning to be afraid that it was never going to rain any more. The garden was perishing, and she liked her garden; for she made it herself, when her husband—a coast-guard—was draughted off to the Crimea, instead of sitting down to fret. A true-hearted woman, I thought.

The cottage was but a single room, somewhat crowded, with two beds, besides the chairs and tables and household sundries; but everything was clean, and I praised the cleanliness. "If I am not mistaken," she replied, "by your tongue you come from the south, and not far from my place. I comes out of Hampshire. Oh, sir, it took me a long time to get used to the ways of this country. I couldn't bear sleeping in the same room with the children, and I don't feel comfortable in doing of it now; but we can't help ourselves. Down in Hampshire we could get a cottage, with a room up stairs and a garden, for three pound a year; but here we have to pay three pound fifteen for just this one room, and no garden but what I made myself. I can't help thinking, sir, that the people up here in Northumberland are terribly behind us in the south, leastways in their houses."

All this was not spoken so connectedly as it is written, but in the course of half-an-hour's talk, which she said did her good, especially as my county joined on to Hampshire. 'Twas like meeting with

somebody from home. "And after all's said and done, sir, it does ye good to hear a bit of the old home-talk."

Yes, and it did me good, too; and I told her so, and encouraged her to persevere in those domestic arts which make home happy; and with a hearty shake of the hands we parted.

Amble is the port of the Coquet, and exists chiefly by fishing and the coal trade. It has a pier, and staithes, and railways running to collieries in the neighbourhood. Though not a large place, it ships more than 70,000 tons of coal a year.

Hence a road leads along the left bank of the river to Warkworth, rising in places to a height which commands a view over the estuary, and to the wooded slopes on which your eye rests with pleasure, as on a promise of improving scenery.

I sauntered on enjoying the views, and anticipating delightful explorations for the rest of the day, and was pacing up the road towards the castle, dazzled by the sun, when a hand was stretched forward from a green bank on my right, and a voice that I seemed to have heard before said, "What, is that you? How far have you walked to-day?"

As soon as the glaring cobwebs permitted, I recognised a friend whom I had met at Newcastle. He had come to Warkworth for the Sunday with his wife and family: there they were, sitting on a seat at the top of the bank, and I must come up and join them.

Then, as it was tea-time, I must accompany them to their lodging, and after acceptable hospitality, we explored for a bed. Taught by experience, I held my tongue, and left the Northumbrian to negotiate; and ere long he found me quarters at the *Masons' Arms*,

and then he volunteered to be my guide to the castle and neighbourhood.

By a steep path leading up from the river's brink we mounted to the postern gate. Many ascend that same path to whom the prospect outspread below is more interesting than the sight of old walls; and truly it invites you to pause for awhile, before going in, to look down upon it. The river, which for some distance upward flows between high, steep, and thickly-wooded banks, here emerges from the shadow, and makes a graceful sweep round the base of the hill, under the ancient bridge, where you may see an ancient gate-house, and then past more trees to the open meadows beyond. The landscape, in places forest-like and hilly, sinks down into broad level fields which, well-cultivated and dotted with farmhouses and the seats of squires, stretch away far as eye can reach: a scene fraught with that quiet rural beauty which an Englishman loves.

Warkworth takes us back to the eighth century, to the days of King Ceolwulf, who gave the lands here and the church which he had built to the monks of Lindisfarn, or Holy Island. We might guess that the monarch foresaw his renunciation of royal power, for in 737 he took the cowl in the monastery which he had enriched by his gifts. Yet, though he gave up his crown, he could not give up the flagon, and we are told that by his authority the monks drank ale and wine instead of water and milk, perhaps to keep himself in countenance. After Ceolwulf there is a blank of 400 years; then we come to the earliest lords of Warkworth, Fitz-Richards and Fitz-Rogers, men of mark, who are summoned to parliament, head expeditions against the Scots, and command as King's lieutenants

in Northumberland. Coming down a few years, we find Edward III. giving Warkworth, with all its manors, to his "beloved kinsman," Henry de Percy, who in return promised to pay a fee of fifty marks yearly to the king, and serve him with men and arms as long as he should live; and, with small exceptions, the Percys have ever since held possession.

The oldest portions were built by Roger Fitz-Richard, in the latter half of the twelfth century; for, as the chronicler relates, when William the Lion set out on his mischievous inroad into England, he said, "Let us go to Warkworth: that I will destroy." The vaunting king, as we may remember, pushed his ravages as far as Brough and Pendragon in Westmoreland; but Northumberland proved fatal to him at last, as we shall by and by see.

Great part of the outer wall, the wall that frowned defiance to the marauding Scots, still remains, grim and solid. Antiquaries assure us that Roger Fitz-Richard was also the builder of the old kitchen which stands even yet on the right of the postern. If we may judge from the dimensions of the fireplace, he loved good cheer, and practised a generous hospitality. We can still see the place of the buttery and pantry, the sink and water trough, and other appliances used by the cook; and, looking across the green, we can see the well whence the garrison drew their water. What memories of feud and foray come to mind as we stroll about; of days when men could defend their rights without the aid of lawyers or juries. Stirring days were those, when one of the earls wrote to the king that he had dressed himself at midnight by the light of the blazing villages set on fire by the Scots: when another sent word to his majesty of the surrender of a

robber knight, "Willyam Lysle and Humfray hys sone, with fifteen other of the rebellius personayges, as I was comyng from mas on Sonday last, they mett me in ther sherttes with haltars abowte ther nekkes, and submyttyd themselffes without any maner of condecion unto your most gracious marcy. Which persons I stryght way comyttyd unto prisons within my pouer castell of Alnewyk, for the sayff kepyng off them unto suche tyme as I may know farther off your most gracius hyghnes pleasouer." The gracious highness herein addressed was Henry VIII.

Passing on from the kitchen we come to the Lion Tower, through which is the entrance to the great hall in the rear. This was built at the end of the fourteenth century by the fourth lord Percy of Alnwick, foremost among the noblemen of his age. But the hall where he held his state is a ruin, a mere shell; the tower is decayed; the shields above the entrance have well-nigh lost their blazon; and the lion is but a fragment. That mutilated figure, to quote a passage from Mr. Hartshone's suggestive description of Warkworth, "is a sad and not inappropriate memorial of the shattered fortunes of this distinguished nobleman; who, after having filled the highest places at home, as Marshal and Constable of England, as Guardian of the Welsh castles, Governor of Calais, Ambassador for Scotland, Warden of the Western Marches, Lord of the Isle of Man, and victor over the Scots at Halidown Hill, fell in battle at Bramham Moor, fruitlessly endeavouring to check the abuses which Henry IV. had introduced into the kingdom by his usurpation and misgovernment." Even his death failed to satisfy the victor, for he ordered the unfortunate nobleman's head to be impaled on London Bridge, and the four

quarters of his body at Lincoln, York, Newcastle, and Berwick.

The curious tall tower beyond, which has the curious name of Cradyfargus, was built by the same lord Henry. It is remarkable for its height and the groined dome in which the stair terminates. Beyond that again, we come to the principal entrance, a heavy double tower, traversed by a pointed arch, supported on each side by two plain many-angled buttresses. Except a few corbels above the gateway, it displayed no signs of ornament to friend or foe,—unless the machicolations and long narrow loopholes are ornaments,—but a severe simplicity. From certain marks and peculiarities in the masonry, the antiquary above quoted concludes it to have been built by the same workmen that were employed to build the castles of Alnwick and Dunstanborough. Now its thick-walled chambers are tenanted by the porter; a functionary, by the way, who does not think it too much trouble to be civil to visitors, and who showed us how snugly he was lodged, both upstairs and down. Snug as in a lighthouse, it seemed to me. Stone, moreover, is chilly; hence the porter's love of a fire, even in summer, is here exemplified.

Another of the Percys, son of him who fell a victim in a popular outbreak near Topcliffe, and was interred so magnificently at Beverley, a lover of learning and religious observances, thought to establish a college here at Warkworth, but death prevented the completion of his benevolent project. It was, however, begun; for the bases of columns still appear on the green, and foundations, cruciform in outline, are still traceable of the church which he commenced, as part of his design, but did not live to finish.

The keep rises proudly on the north, a striking memorial of its builder, the son of that dauntless Hotspur who still lives before us in Shakespeare's page. I feel tempted to describe it in the words of a survey taken 300 years ago: "The dongion is in the north parte of the scyte of the sayd castell, sett upon a little mount highyer than the rest of the courte; and the same ys buyld as a foure square; and owt of every square one towre; all which be so quarterly squared together, that in the sight every parte appeareth fyve towres, very finely wrought of mason worke, and in the same conteyned, as well a fare hall, kytchinge, and all other houses of offices verie fare and aptely placed, as also great chambre, chapell, and lodgings for the lord and his trayn. In the middle thereof is a peace voyd, which is called a lantern, which both receyveth the water from diverse spowtes of the lead, and hath his conveyance for the same, and also gevith light to certaine lodgings in some partes. And on the part of the same at the top ys raysed of a good hight above all the houses a turret, called the watchouse; upon the top whereof ys a great vyew to be had, and a fare prospect, as well towards the sea as all parties of the land."

This description answers in the main for the present time; externally the keep still shows as eight towers, the turret still rises aloft, the lantern admits light in the interior; but the chapel, some of the chambers, and vaults are in a state of well-preserved ruin. Henceforth pains will be taken to preserve it from decay: the exposed parts have been reroofed, and some of the apartments restored and furnished for the use of the Duke and Duchess, by Mr. Salvin, at present architect of the new works going on at Alnwick Castle. These apartments are not shown to visitors, unless on special

order; hence we saw only the chapel and hall, and other rooms from roof to basement which the porter had liberty to show. But that was enough to make us aware that the keep, if completely restored and furnished would make a very comfortable residence.

The porter talked of his noble master and mistress as one earnest alike in respect and admiration. The Duke, he said, liked to see his people happy, and was always willing to afford the public a sight of his domains; and as for the Duchess, he could not speak of her in ordinary language, "she was such a nice little body; not a bit of pride in her!" I heard the same remark many times afterwards, and from persons who were neither tenants nor retainers of the ducal house.

Who has not heard of the Hermit of Warkworth? The hermitage is about half-a-mile up the river; the porter's son waits ready with his boat at the foot of the hill, and rows you thither under the shadow of overhanging trees, while the masses of foliage and the image of the castle, reflected in the clear sparkling water, heighten the general charm. Verily, our Coquet deserves all the praises which have been lavished upon it; and here, near the end of its course, I found it not less beautiful than where I first beheld it in days gone by nearer its source among the hills. The artist lingers on its banks portfolio in hand; and the angler following its sportive windings, grows blithesome in spirit, and sings out of the fulness of his heart:—

"The Coquet for ever, the Coquet for aye!
The Coquet the king o' the stream an' the brae,
Frae his high mountain throne, to his bed in the sea,
Oh! where shall we find such a river as he?
Then blessings be on him, and lang may he glide,
The fisherman's home and the fisherman's pride;
From Harden's green hill, to old Warkworth sae gray,
The Coquet for ever! the Coquet for aye!"

Another, not to be outdone, chimes in with—

"Oh! freshly from his mountain holds
Comes down the rapid Tyne:—
But Coquet's still the stream o' streams,
So let her still be mine.
There's mony a sawmon lies in Tweed,
An' mony a trout in Till;
But Coquet—Coquet, aye for me,
If I may have my will."

The left bank becomes precipitous as we advance; crags peep out here and there, half buried in a tangle of ivy, bush, and creepers; and under one of these crags, a little farther on, the boat stops. You cross the bank, ascend a few rude steps, and enter an oratory hewn out of the solid rock. Recollections of the bishop's well-known ballad come crowding on the mind and rouse your curiosity:

"Musing on man's weak hapless state
The lonely hermit lay,
When, lo! he heard a female voice
Lament in sore dismay."

You see an altar, monumental sculptures, a piscina and lavatory, a hagioscope—in common speech, a squint—all within a chamber of twenty feet in length, and seven in height and width; all produced, moreover, in the hewing, the vaulting and ribs of the ceiling, the doorway, the quatrefoil window, all are wrought out of the solid stone. The ceiling has three vaulted compartments, each with its central boss, and groins running down to pilaster columns which spring from the floor, all produced by the chisel.

On the inner wall, over the entrance, are the remains, very obscure, of an inscription in the old English character, which, as is supposed, will bear the interpretation—Fuerunt mihi lacrymæ meæ panes die

at nocte. His was a keen eye that made it out. We may, however, accept it on trust, and believe that here some great sorrow has sought relief by years of prayer and penitence. One of the sculptures represents a full length female figure, lying as on a tomb, her feet resting on a bull's head; while two half-length figures, one of them angelic, appear close beside her on the wall. The rood exhibits the remains of another rude carving, and over the arched doorway leading into the confessional, appears a shield, bearing the sponge, nails, crown of thorns, and other emblems of the crucifixion, and illegible traces of an inscription. This confessional forms a small chamber on the left of the altar; and on the same side of the chapel is the dormitory, having an excavation in the wall to receive the bed, and at the lower end a doorway opening upon a perished stair. Grose describes the three chambers as chapel, antechapel, and sacristy, and explains that the hermit slept and prepared his food in the little building outside, of which the much-dilapidated remains may still be seen at the foot of the rock.

Altogether, it is a place to wonder at, as much for the motive through which it was accomplished, as for the singular result of the patient labour bestowed upon it. There is, however, nothing but surmise and internal evidence to trust to for its origin, and from these the date of excavation is assigned to the last half of the fourteenth century. And Mr. Hartshorne shows that in all probability the founder was Henry Percy, third lord of Alnwick, who, on the death of his wife Mary Plantagenet, caused the excavation to be made, as a chantry where masses might be sung for the repose of her soul, and his grief find solace in the offices of religion.

On the top of the rock the hermit had his garden. You can mount to the spot by a very rustic stair, which gives access to the old stone steps. No signs of a garden now remain. Bushes, weeds, and mosses cover the scanty soil, and tall beeches overshadow it. From this elevation, as from the landing below, there is a pleasing view into the surrounding wood, wherein you may discover pretty combinations of leafage and water. Often as Spenser's stanza has been quoted, it will bear repetition here, and assist the impression of the scene on our mind :—

> "A little lowly hermitage it was,
> Down in a dale, hard by a forest's side,
> Far from resort of people, that did pass
> In travel to and fro : a little wide
> There was an holy chapel edified,
> Wherein the hermit duly wont to say
> His holy things each morn and eventide ;
> Thereby a crystal stream did gently play,
> Which from a sacred fountain welled forth alway."

If, as the evidence shows, we are to doubt the story so gracefully told by the ingenious bishop, we may thankfully accept the conjecture which presents the hermitage to us as the memorial of a husband's heart-felt love, of the pious service by which his sorrow was chastened; the sorrow which visits alike the proud and the lowly. In later years, however, we meet with something certain in a curious document, from which I venture to quote a passage to close the subject: "I do gyve and graunte," says the Earl of Northumberland, in a parchment of the year 1531, "in consideration of the diligent & thankfull service that my well-beloved chaplen Sir George Lancastre, hath don unto me . . . myn armytage bilded in a rock of stone within my parke of Warkworth . . with a yerly stipende of twenty

merkes by yer . . and also the occupation of one little grasground of myn called Conygarth, nygh adjoynynge the said harmytage." The chaplain, moreover, was to have a garden and "orteyard," the use of two horses, pasture for twelve kye and a bull, twenty loads of wood, and "one draught of fishe every sondaie in the yer to be drawen forenenst the said armytage."

The evening drew on so calm and golden, that after our survey of the rock inside and out, of the hermit's garden, his kitchen and well, the boat was sent back with the youngsters, and we took a walk farther up the river. A delightful walk it was, rising and falling among the trees, with glimpses of the stream for the eye, and the noise of a milldam for the ear. And so up the ascent till we emerged upon the fields; and returning by the road, we crossed the bridge, and passed through the ancient arch of the gatehouse, in the cool twilight.

CHAPTER XII.

Alnwick—The Old Gate—Quiet Day and Market Day—The Castle—The Barbican—The Baily—Permission to View—The Duke's Tower—The Duchess's Tower—The Keep—The Well—The Grand Staircase—Native Material—Decorations from Chevy Chase—Gorgeous Ceilings—Hall of the first Percy—A Question of Art—Native Artists—The Prudhoe Tower—The Record Tower—The Museum—Hotspur's Chair—A Great Household—Reminiscence of Canina—The Evil Eye—Glimpses of History—Tysen—De Vesci—The Percys—Valour, Honour, and the Headsman—From Percy to Smithson—Royal Visitors—Sir Ralph the Birdkeeper.

I MET my friend and his wife at the railway station on the morrow; they having an errand to Alnwick as well as I, we journeyed thither in company. The distance is about seven miles, so we were soon in the town which Northumbrians call Annick.

Revisiting a place after some years opens a long-disused page of memory, and it is with a lively interest that you recognise features and objects which seemed forgotten: the impression they made was deeper than we thought. So, on walking from the station into the town, my curiosity was kept alive by noticing the local changes; missing here and there some old acquaintance. The tall column testifying the tenantry's gratitude to the late Duke, still rears itself aloft, and there on the same side of the way, the trees of the ducal gardens still show their heads above the wall. A little farther and Bondgate—an old heavy arched gateway, supported by two heavy towers—bestrides the street; a relic of the

Plantagenet times, which the nineteenth century regards as an obstruction. It would long ago have been pulled down, but for its historical associations. It was built by Henry Hotspur's son, he who erected the keep at Warkworth, more than four hundred years ago, when, on the restoration of the Percy estates by Henry V., he got leave to fortify the town.

The streets are quiet; indeed, we might fancy ourselves in a clean well-paved cathedral town. Farther on stands the market-house, with town-hall over it, built by the late Duke: here, too, quiet prevails; but come on a market-day, and you will see such a gathering of Northumbrians as will astonish your eyes and ears. Then, as Halleck rhymes it—

> "Then beasts and borderers throng the way;
> Oxen, and bleating lambs in lots,
> Northumbrian boors, and plaided Scots;
> Men in the coal and cattle line,
> From Teviot's bard and hero land,
> From royal Berwick's beach of sand,
> From Wooler, Morpeth, Hexham, and
> Newcastle-upon-Tyne."

"You are come at the wrong time, if you want to see the Castle," said the landlord of the *White Swan*, when I went in to leave my knapsack: "Nobody is admitted while the new buildings are going on. You won't get in."

"No harm in trying," I answered.

"No harm: only you won't get in. Take my word for it."

There is something imposing in the sight that awaits you on emerging from a narrow street upon the broad road—the barbican, with its dark arch and embattled towers, the lofty octagonal gate-towers behind, the massive embrasured walls on each side—all seeming as

if they belonged to a real castle, built for use rather than show. The effect is heightened by the big statues of warriors standing here and there on the parapets, even the highest. Some appear to be quietly watching; some grotesque in attitude, threaten and defy; one bends his crossbow, another holds a missile ready to cast down on the heads of invading Scots, who more than once laid siege to Alnwick.

No signs now appear of the two moats which had to be crossed before reaching the gate; one ran within the entrance of the barbican, and as that gloomy passage shut in by high walls was protected besides by three or four gates, the enemy, once inside, were caught as in a trap, powerless against the stones hurled from above. There is a feeling of relief as you pass the porter's lodge to the spacious court within. Before us rises the keep, a mass of old and new masonry; the curtain wall stretches away on each hand, here supporting a turret or garret, there strengthened by a tower, masking on the right the offices and servants' lodgings; and between spread broad plots of grass, bordered by stripes of pavement. We are in the outer ward or baily; beyond the keep we get a peep into the middle ward, and a distant one, for the space inclosed is about five acres; room enough to hold joustings, and to train or review the garrison. But now the troop engaged are not fighting-men but workmen; heaps of stone and rubbish and piles of timber encumber the ground, and there is a lively noise of labour. The Castle is putting on an aspect of comfort and magnificence which it never had before.

Owing to the alterations the household were roughing it in a range of buildings on the right of the court. I presented my letter at the door indicated by the tall

liveried porter; it was promptly answered by a message from up-stairs, and I had the pleasure of a brief interview with the Duke and Duchess. They were on the point of setting out for Warkworth; but his Grace leading the way to the court, spoke a few words to Mr. Salvin the architect, and kindly included my Newcastle friends in his permission to view the interior; and the architect completed the favour by placing us under the guidance of his clerk of the works.

The keep gains in diversity of outline and dignity of expression by the restorations and additional buildings, while the Past finds itself brought into unwonted harmony with the Present. The entrance is still defended by the Duke's Tower on one side, by the Duchess's Tower on the other, and between them curves the admirable Norman arch, a relic of the stronghold, erected about 1145 by Eustace Fitz-John, then Baron of Alnwick. In the outer wall there are portions which were also built by him at the same date. The Percys began their works two centuries later. The barbican and principal gate were built by the first Lord Henry: the well, which we see on the right as we enter the court, is his, and a pleasing example of beauty and utility combined; a shallow pointed arch sunk in the wall about five feet from the ground, and within this three small arches immediately over the mouth of the well, and deep enough to receive the axle and two pegged handwheels, by which the water was laboriously raised. With this well at command, and a good store of provisions, the Lords of Alnwick could hold out for months, even after the loss of their outworks; for the keep itself was protected by a moat.

There are vaults and dungeons under the towers, which have not been altered since they were first built,

or since they were occupied by Sir William Lysle and his party; grim-looking places in which, if a prisoner died, it was not, as in our day, from kindness overmuch; for he was shut up, as it were, in a big stone bottle, the neck of which, the only opening, was far above his head.

The entrance to the keep itself is under a covered drive, designed with such skill that it has no appearance of being an excrescence. Before it was built there was nothing to shelter visitors from the weather while alighting from their carriages; and as there was no covered way leading to the kitchen, the servants were at times dodging among the horses with the dinner trays; and a story still runs that once a dish of patties was scattered by a gust of wind. Now, a corridor, supported on arches, is carried along one side of the court, with access to a lift from the kitchen, whereby the service will in future be saved from exposure.

The leading idea in the plan of the restorations is to advance from the simple to the elaborate; from the unadorned to the superbly decorated; hence the grand staircase, though of noble proportions, is plain in character. Each step is formed of a single stone, twelve feet in length; each landing of a single slab, twelve feet square; all beautifully white and unblemished, wherein all that can be desired in the way of effect is obtained, and another part of the plan is accomplished, which provides that as much as possible native material shall be used. This stone is got from a quarry on Rothbury Moor, where the stratum is so thick and sound, that blocks and slabs may be hewed in one piece big enough for a Cleopatra's needle, without a flaw, and hard enough to take a good polish. The external building stone is quarried on Alnwick Moor.

We had plenty of scope for the exercise of imagination, seeing that three years more are required for the completion of the works. But among floorless rooms, and walls and passages in the rough, we saw something finished, and could judge of the contemplated effect, where Italian art is made to combine with the mediæval character of a Border fortress. That it was for centuries the abode of the Percys is not to be forgotten; their blazonry will be suitably introduced, and their deeds form the subject of decorations. Each cove of the vestibule at the head of the stair will bear a painting of some incident in that famous field of Chevy Chase:—

> "Five hundred kilted Highlandmen are coming o'er the hills,
> The music of the Scottish glen the vales of Cheviot fills;
> The Warden's bugles loud and long the sudden news convey—
> Earl Percy mount thy gallant steed and hurry to the fray!"

On the ceiling some large subject from English history will be shown. The capture of William the Lion might be appropriate, or Edward II. conferring knighthood on Henry Percy, under the walls of Berwick; that is, if a ceiling be the right place for a painting. To a simple-minded man, a picture in a place painful to look at is a mistake.

The drawing-room has a ceiling of carved wood, in panels richly gilt and coloured, producing a gorgeousness of effect which would be staring, were it not controlled by admirably cultivated taste. There is no compost or papier mâché, but honest genuine wood, carved by skilful hands under the direction of Signor Bulletti. A deep pictured frieze runs all round under the cornice, on a purple ground, which, when the walls are covered with red satin damask, will harmonise the effect between wall and ceiling. With variations of

colour, the same method is followed in the other principal rooms—yellow damask in one, green in another. The ceiling of the dining-room is left in the natural colour of the wood, pine carvings on panels of walnut: I would rather have seen that than the other, but it was closely covered with brown holland to exclude the dust. This room, sixty feet long and twenty-four wide, occupies the site of the banqueting hall built by the first Percy of Alnwick. By lapse of years and neglect it had sunk on one side, cracked, and become unsafe; and though the late Duke had altered it into a weak style of Gothic, it was stripped of its stucco and mouldings, and the original walls were laid bare, when besides the dangerous condition, an interesting discovery was made; the mark made by the dais—the seat of honour in the olden time; another mark showing where the buffet had been fixed, and close by a small recess containing a water drain, and a stair leading down to the cellar, while the hooks to which the tapestry had been hung still remained in the failing wall.

Within the Prudhoe Tower, a new erection, we saw the library; a stately room, commanding from its windows a pleasing view over the park, and of the Aln flowing along at the foot of the slope. Here the family portraits will be hung, above bookcases of polished maple. We saw the chapel, the kitchen with its lofty groined roof, the cook's domicile, the larders, noticing everywhere the same clever arrangement, and adaptation of means to ends; and if some day we should only see the whole after the finishing, our satisfaction will be complete. All that good taste and skill can do, aided by wealth, will be accomplished; and Alnwick become more famous than ever, notwithstanding the criticisms which have been freely expressed on the

introduction of Italian art of the fifteenth century among Gothic. At a meeting of the Institute of British Architects, it was argued that Gothic admitted of all the expansion, ornament, and adaptation that could be required, remaining at the same time strictly logical. On the other hand, the innovation finds defenders, who show that, after all, the incongruity is not so great, considering how small a part of the original castle remains, and the large extent and importance of the late Duke's alterations. For my part, I would very humbly inquire, why must we be always going back to copy from the past in any style? Why can't we invent a style for ourselves?

The present Duke holds it of "national importance" that the style of art-decoration here in question should be widely known and cultivated in England. His costly experiment may be regarded as a highly significant step towards the desired end. As with native material, so with native skill; he uses both where they will answer the purpose. Among the two hundred labourers and artificers employed, there are twenty-seven carvers, mostly Northumbrians. Some of the first carvings were made in Italy, and it was thought that the like could not be produced in this country; but Mr. Salvin found a journeyman, John Brown by name, working for a cabinet-maker in Alnwick, who, on being asked to copy the egg ornament, did his work in so masterly a style, that it was resolved to have all the carvings made on the spot. Inquiries were set on foot: other men were found who could work with their hearts, as well as hands and heads, and now twenty-one men and six boys are shaping blocks of wood into things of beauty, and establishing a new school of art, under the direction of Signor

Bulletti, with John Brown as foreman. The designs and specifications for the whole work were furnished by the Commendatore Canina, a distinguished architect of Rome. The foundation stone of the Prudhoe Tower was laid by the Duchess, on the 25th of November, 1854, and since that time the works have been carried on without interruption.

The clerk ended his part by leading us to his office in the Abbot's Tower, where we saw plans and elevations, and a model of the castle, constructed to enable the Duchess to judge of the effect of the Prudhoe Tower, as seen from the park. Then my friends took their departure, and I went to the office of the Duke's minister of the interior, and received pass-tickets to clear the lodges from that amiable functionary, with the intimation, "his Grace has left word that you are to go everywhere and see everything." This gave me opportunity for a stroll round the middle ward, and into the park. The Record Tower, at the eastern angle, contains the Duke's museum of Egyptian antiquities, among which is one of those small vases of Chinese manufacture, which have so much puzzled Egyptologists. It was found within the wrappings of a mummy, and is one of the only three specimens extant. To explain how workmanship of the Central Flowery Land came to be found inside pyramids will probably long remain a puzzle. Following the wall, we come to the turret known as Hotspur's Chair, and farther, to the Constable Tower and Postern Tower, each one interesting from its architectural peculiarities, and the associations which it recalls. There were formerly more towers than at present, and an Exchequer House, near the entrance, set apart for the administration of the affairs of the household and estates.

When we remember that the barony of Alnwick comprehended thirty-three towns, we see a reason for the appointment of a numerous staff of civil officers to keep the affairs in order, besides the ordinary servants. A castle-greave, a constable, a feodary, a receiver and auditor, a steward skilled in learning, and clerks many and bailiffs managed the affairs between the lord and tenantry and all who owed suit and service, to say nothing of priests and choristers for the service of religion. In the *Northumberland Household Book*, published a few years ago, we see what the domestic economy of the Percys was on the great scale, on the Yorkshire estates only, before the abbeys were put down.

Passing from the court to the park, you have an agreeable prospect from the broad path, which, sheltered from the bitter winds of the east and north, enjoys whatever sun may shine. Canina, a son of the South, loved to walk here during his sojourn at the castle. It will not be out of place to mention concerning this architect, that he loved his art with a genuine affection, and won esteem as much by his disinterestedness as his knowledge. He died at Florence, soon after leaving England on his return to Rome. In this there seems something remarkable when regarded in connection with an incident of which I borrow the particulars from a notice of Canina brought before the Institute above-mentioned: "He was not free from the superstitious sentiments common to many of his countrymen," says Mr. Donaldson; "and, from an intuitive dread of consequences, would never allow his portrait to be painted, nor his bust to be modelled. By a friendly stratagem, I induced him to visit Messrs. Maull and Polyblank's photographic establishment, and after much

persuasion prevailed on him to permit his likeness to be taken, as one of the notabilities of the day. But it did violence to his feelings, and to avert the *malocchio* he arranged (as he thought unobservedly) the fingers of his right hand, as a charm against the evil consequences that he feared; a presentiment which the sad event of his death so soon after almost seemed to realise."

We cannot do better while sauntering down the slope to look at the keep from the river side, than give a few minutes thought to a glimpse of history. When Harold fought and fell at Hastings, there fell with him a certain Gilbert Tysen, to whom the lands of Alnwick belonged, leaving a granddaughter who in the distribution of rewards by the Conqueror was given with her estates to the Norman chief Yvo de Vesci. Nothing whatever is known of Tysen's castle; it may have been merely a peel or small fortified tower; but as we have seen, some parts of the buildings erected by his immediate successors yet remain. The de Vescis held possession for many years; they were men of note in their day—Eustace Fitz John was governor of Bamborough, and Justice-itinerant with Walter L'Espec, that worthy knight whom we heard of at Rievaulx. Another of the family went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land; another was one of the barons who applied the pressure from without on falsehearted John at Runnymede. At length it befel that there was default of legitimate issue, and Anthony Bek, bishop of Durham—the fighting bishop as he was called, who wore a suit of armour under his clerical robes—was appointed trustee of the barony on behalf of the doubtful heir; and he, choosing to please himself, sold it to Henry Percy. The deed of conveyance is still in existence.

This Percy was a descendant of one who came over with the Conqueror, bringing with him the name of the little Norman village which stands near the road as you go from Granville to Avranches, and had long been their dwelling-place. Duke William must have loved them, for he gave lands in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, more than a hundred lordships in the two counties, to William de Percy who founded an abbey at Whitby, and was buried there in the nave, and his son Alan after him. Then we read of matrimonial alliances: one marries Baldwin the Earl of Flanders' daughter, and one of the ladies is espoused by a son of the Duke of Brabant, whose sister was queen to our Henry I. Later, Henry de Percy appears among the captains of the English troops in Gascony; in 1294 he is knighted by Edward I. under the walls of Berwick; then he distinguishes himself at the battle of Dunbar; leads an army on five several occasions into Scotland; sits in the parliament of barons held at Lincoln, and in 1309 purchases the lands here as aforementioned, and hence is styled the first lord of Alnwick. He at once repaired the dilapidations in the works of the de Vescis, and built the barbican, and main entrance, and the towers of the keep.

His son Henry was not less famous; he too showed himself a valiant soldier against the Scots, and in one great battle he took David their king prisoner; and as the chronicler told us some pages back, a gift of the castle and lordship of Warkworth came to him in token of royal love and gratitude. The Percys fought at Cressy. The fourth lord of Alnwick—Hotspur's father—married for second wife the widow of Gilbert de Umfraville, whereby the barony of Prudhoe and the honour and castle of Cockermouth were added to the

possessions of the Percys. He fell at Bramham Moor, fighting against the faithless Bolingbroke, who but for him would never have worn the crown. His son, as we all know from Shakespeare, was slain on that fatal Shropshire field four years earlier, by the same Lancastrian power. Still the great house goes on taking part in the tremendous civil strife: St. Albans was fatal to the fifth lord, and Towton to the sixth. Then we hear of a grand day at York, when Margaret Tudor on her way to Scotland to become the wife of James IV., was met by the Earl of Northumberland and a gallant train of knights and nobles. Stately was the array and magnificent, but not one equalled the Percy, as the chronicle tells: "What for the richness of his cote, being of goldsmith's work, garnished with pearls and stones, and the costly apparell of his henxmen, and gallant trappers of their horses, besides four hundred tall men, well armed, and apparelled in his collers, he was esteemed, both of the Scots and Englishmen, more like a prince than a subject."

The *Pilgrimage of Grace* rallies the Roman Catholics of the North in a vain attempt to oppose the Reformation: two Percys are implicated: one, Sir Thomas, is executed at Tyburn; the other suffers imprisonment for awhile in the Tower of London, is however liberated; and in after times inquisitive antiquaries read an inscription on the wall of Beauchamp Tower, in which was his cell:—

SARO : FIDELI :
INGGRAM
PERCY,
1537.

The estates are estreated, but restored after nineteen years by a grant of Philip and Mary, to the son of the

abovenamed Sir Thomas, who becomes seventh earl. In Elizabeth's reign one of his successors is beheaded: meanwhile the estates are neglected, and castles and towers fall into ruin. Time rolls on, and Algernon Percy, the tenth earl, is lord High Admiral at the time of Charles the First's fatal quarrel with the nation about ship-money; and one of his exploits is destroying the fleet of Dutch fishing-boats for their intrusion into British waters: an exploit which must have endeared him to the fishermen of the eastern coast, as it would in our day were Captain Osborne to sink the foreign boats that come to the herring fishery.

At the end of Charles the Second's reign the word concerning Alnwick is "once large, but now ruined," and so it remains for a hundred years until Sir Hugh Smithson marries the Lady Elizabeth Seymour, daughter of Algernon Duke of Somerset, becomes thereby the thirteenth Earl of Northumberland, and Duke by creation in 1766. Then Alnwick Castle revives once more. He repairs, pulls down, and rebuilds largely; but not with happy results either for grandeur or convenience. However, the inconveniences were tolerated until as we have seen, the present Duke began his alterations and improvements in 1854. Henceforth art will compete with antiquity in sustaining its renown, and the Windsor of the North will be in Northumberland.

Then with another glance into the past we see the gates of Alnwick opened and the drawbridges lowered to receive royal visitors. John was here four times. In 1209 he came to settle disputes with the Scots; in 1216 his progress was marked by fire and sword. The first three Edwards lodged here on their advance upon Scotland. Henry IV. captured it on his

return from Berwick in the same year that he took Warkworth. After that terrible field of Towton, five hundred men, commanded by Peter de Brezé, were sent over from France at the solicitation of Margaret of Anjou, to hold Alnwick for the Red Rose. Twice did the desperate queen resort to this expedient; but Edward IV. marched into Northumberland, the Earl of Warwick and other commanders pressed the siege, and Alnwick surrendered in January 1464. Three months later, Sir Ralph Percy lost his life in a skirmish on Hedgeley Moor, where the old stone cross still reminds the passer-by of the valiant knight and his untimely end, and his loyalty to the House of Lancaster, which has passed into a proverb.

"Ha! quenched is the crescent's light—lo! where he bleeding lies!
True were the words he recklessly braved:
Mark ye his glazing eye,
List ye his dying cry!
'Triumph! the bird in my bosom I've saved.'"

In the following month of May, as we have already seen, the Red Rose was finally cut down by the battle of Hexham.

CHAPTER XIII.

Fetterlock and Crescent—Capturing a Lion—A Walk in the Park—The Brislee Tower—The Prospect—Inspirations—Moralising—Hulne Abbey—John de Vesci—A Pilgrimage to Palestine—A Discovery on Carmel—Days of Old—The Northumbrian Carmel—The Friar's Library—A Word of Wisdom—Dormentory and Ivory—Parlez vous Français?—An Inscription—Alnwick Abbey—Malcolm's Spring—A Miraculous Relic—A Lucky Burgess—Tombs of the Percys—Malcolm's Cross.

But it is time to ramble farther. We leave the castle and come presently to the church, which contains a superbly-decorated chancel, and masonry that dates from the time of the second lord of Alnwick, and on the capital of one of the pillars you may see the fetterlock and crescent—the Percy badge. A little farther and among the trees on the right of the road we see the stone cross which commemorates the capture of William the Lion. The Scottish monarch returning flushed with success from his ravage of the northern counties halted before Alnwick, hoping to include it among his captures. The English barons, having relieved Prudhoe, started in pursuit, leaving Newcastle at dawn on July 13th, 1174, and marched for some hours, until bewildered by a thick fog it seemed best to return. But Bernard de Baliol declaring that he would advance even though alone, they moved forwards once more, and the fog presently clearing off they found themselves to their great surprise within sight of Alnwick. William who was encamped with about fourscore

knights near the place where the cross now stands, at first supposed them to be a division of his own army; but discovering his mistake as their banner came nearer, he cried "Now we shall see who are good knights," put spurs to his horse and charged. Fortune, however, deserted him; he was unhorsed and taken prisoner with his followers, and conducted the same day to Newcastle. He was kept prisoner in Richmond Castle for awhile, and afterwards led before the king at Northampton with his legs tied under the horse's belly—a mark of indignity. Later, about the year 1200, we hear of him as taking an oath of fealty to John, and after that we may dismiss him from our memory.

How fragrant was the park with new-mown hay as I walked across the undulating slopes to the height crowned by the Brislee Tower. This is a pleasant spot, well sheltered by wood, in which the openings entice your eye as into a forest glade. Cottages are scattered about, tenanted by retainers of the estate; and you can see by the style in which they are built that the good time has come for some Northumbrian cottagers. The woman who lives nearest to the tower, and keeps the key, and exhibits ginger beer, told me that the Duke didn't keep his place locked up, as some folk do, but liked to let people come in and see it, so long as they didn't do mischief. There were two open days in the week, Sunday being one of the two, when the public were allowed to walk in the park.

The tower stands on the brow of the hill, an elegant structure ninety feet in height, bearing inscriptions which tell us as much as we wish to know of its history. Thus:—*H. Dvx. Northvmbriæ fecit.* MDCCLXXXI. *Circumspice. Ego omnia ista sum dimensus; mei sunt*

ordines, mea descriptio; multæ etiam istaurum arborum mea manu sunt satæ. There is a balcony at each stage from which you may anticipate the view that lies outspread beneath your eye from the top. You see the park, the river winding through, farms here and there on the uplands, the town and castle, Ratsheugh Crag, the sea, and the Isles in one direction; in the other you look into the fertile and wooded vale of Whittingham, thence from hill to hill up to the rounded summits of the Cheviots, and away to the blue heights of Teviotdale, forty miles distant. There are acres of rustling foliage, ash, birch, and beech; and dark masses of firs on the outskirts; and from amid the trees on the opposite hill peer the ruins of Hulne Abbey, once tenanted by Carmelite friars.

One likes to linger over such a view. The variety, the expanse, the breeze, the sunshine, inspire a feeling as of renewed youth. It comes with gazing. We have only to gaze with a loving heart, and Nature will do the rest.

And while I lingered in the lofty balcony, I thought it a fine thing to be a Duke: to look round and say all this is mine!—mine the hills, the woods, the broad fields, the houses! to exercise power; to will one good thing after another, till the best was accomplished, till prosperity and beauty reigned throughout my possessions: to try whether decent habitation will moralise a tenantry: to show how the loftiest rank may be adorned by virtuous life: to lead the very servility of society to wise purposes, even as the cunning medicine-man of the Chikasaws by boiling snakes extracts therefrom a healing ointment:—to do all this, and more, would indeed be a fine thing!

I came down from the tower wondering whether I had grown envious; plunged down the hill-side through

brake and heather and copse, the nearest way to the ruin; crossed the river, and only slackened my pace when climbing the steep grassy slope to the ancient gateway. Foliage and weather-stains relieve the severe aspect of the high inclosing wall; and the buildings seen from the arch appear to be embowered, so luxuriant is the wood. Coming nearer I saw a garden, and hencoops, and hens and chickens, and a comfortable homestead, and a woman who, speaking with a tongue not Northumbrian, showed me the way up the tower. When on the leads I could not help lingering once more to contemplate the charming scene below; so secluded though on a hilltop; so quiet, so shut in' by wood and shrubbery, that you cannot resist the mute appeal. Not that there is any remarkable beauty in the architecture; the style is sober as befits a religious edifice exposed to visits from lawless borderers; but it is the combination of pleasing objects, the thoughts they inspire, and the reminiscences they awaken that work the charm.

Six hundred years may have rolled away since John de Vesci founded here a house of Carmelite friars. A minor, at the time of his father's decease in 1252, he travelled in foreign parts until of age to enter upon his inheritance. The crusades were still a favourite theme with pilgrim and minstrel; many a one did he meet who had taken part in the soul-stirring campaigns against the Infidel, and he too influenced alike by heroic associations and religious enthusiasm journeyed to the Holy Land, accompanied by Richard Gray, a fellow-countryman. In their wanderings amid the scenes where Israel of old had suffered and triumphed; where One was born according to the promise; where Europe had poured out her best blood to rescue the hallowed

places from the hands of the heathen, they came to Carmel, visiting the monastery which zealous poverty had long maintained upon the Mount. Among the brethren they found a fellow-countryman, one Ralph Fresborn, who after doing valiantly in the ranks of the crusaders had taken the vow of poverty and the gown of the White Friars. We can imagine the joyful surprise of their unexpected meeting. How the heart of the monk must have warmed towards the strangers as he heard the familiar speech of his native land, the accents of that distant Northumbria, which even religious vows could not banish from his memory! How thoughts of his home and his boyhood must have rushed to his mind as he heard his mother-tongue rough and vigorous; but sweeter to his ear than fairy music! And they, the new-comers, must have hailed him in that remote spot as brother. And when in the eventide they mounted to the roof of the monastery, and looked forth over the sun-scorched landscape of Palestine, how their hearts must have burned within them as they talked of the mighty deeds wrought in times of old. On Carmel the prophet had sojourned and waited for the word of the Lord: on Carmel he had assembled the false priests, and built an altar, and called the fire from heaven, and led them thence to their doom by the brook of Kishon: on Carmel had he heard "a sound of abundance of rain:" from Carmel's top had been seen the rising of "a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand." Was not the monastery built on the spot where the prophet had offered the wondrous sacrifice? And while they talked their eyes would rest on green slopes and pastures, for even from the ancient days Carmel had been "the habitation of shepherds."

And he, the cowled one, how eagerly must he have

questioned the new-comers concerning his northern home, talking lovingly of his birth-place, of the heathery hills and cool green valleys watered by sparkling rivers and rapid brooks, and of woods that rustled as if for joy when summer breezes blew. And deep emotions stirred them; yonder their home, far towards the polar-star; but around them the birth-place of that faith which glowed in their hearts, cheering and sustaining as of old, and as it shall cheer and sustain in ages yet to come.

De Vesci and his companion made entreaty that their countryman might have permission to return to England with them, but for a while in vain. At last the superior consented, on their promise to erect a house of Carmelite friars in the land of their hopes, and they journeyed homewards. Wandering here by the side of the Aln, so runs the story, they looked on a fair hill which reminded them of Mount Carmel, and here they fulfilled their promise. De Vesci, it is said, gave the land, and Fresborn built the monastery, which, according to the precepts of the order, maintained a self-denying principle as long as its power lasted. At the dissolution, the whole revenue was under two hundred pounds. The Percys confirmed the de Vesci's grants, leaving to the friars their right to pasture, to fishing in the Aln, to a mill, to firewood, and charcoal, to nuts, and all the wild wax and honey in the adjacent woods. Of money the brotherhood had but little; but they had a good library, as their catalogue still shows. When tired of sermons, homilies, and meditations, of which they had good store, they could recreate themselves with treatises on grammar or logic, or with chronicles and legends, and the life and miracles of the blessed Saint Cuthbert. In looking through the catalogue

it strikes one as curious to find here and there a book or tracts described as kept "*in uno bagge*," in a bag.

It is not unprofitable to pause over these evidences of thoughtful life and labour in an age rolling ever farther and farther away into the Past, and to ask ourselves whether if, as we are apt to boast, we have more light, our lives are in proportion better than theirs who lived in the thirteenth century.

Long did I saunter to and fro where the monks had once paced the cloisters, enjoying the quiet and musing on the signs of decay, signs but too apparent amid all the beauty. And while I mused, memory opening a little cell, reminded me of a word of wisdom,—

> "And when I feel my virtue fail,
> And my ambitious thoughts prevail,
> I'll take a turn among the tombs,
> And see whereto all glory comes:"

and whatever my thoughts on the Brislee tower, I no longer envied either coronets or consols.

Some parts of the ruin are not easy to make out; but we can see that the church was long and narrow, and trace the cloisters, the refectory, the kitchen, bakehouse, besides the foundations of other buildings, here and there beautified by full clustering masses of ivy, or "ivory," as the polite matron calls it. She will leave you to saunter by yourself, if you wish to be alone; but if you choose her company she is not sparing of cheerful talk, intermingled with little anecdotes of the house and of visitors. She has picked up an artist's word, and at one part of the grounds bids you admire "a pretty bit," seen in perspective, which has been sketched a hundred times; she points out the "sediliases," and the "dormentory," and the statues of monks here and there; and calls your attention over and

over again to the effect of the "ivory;" but she leaves you to discover for yourself that lemonade and ginger-beer stand ready for sale.

"*Parlez vous Français?*" she asked, as we paced slowly among the old walls, and getting a reply in the affirmative she became yet more voluble than before declaring that it did her good to have a talk in her native tongue; and she told me how that she had left her home in France when a young girl, and after living in certain high English families, entered the Duke's household, and finally married one of his keepers.

An inscription on the western wall tells us a little history concerning the tower. It runs,

> "In the year of Crist Ihu MCCCCLXXXVIII.
> This towr was bilded by Sir Henry Percy
> The fourth Earl of Northumberland of great honor and worth,
> That espoused Maud the good lady full of vertue and beauty,
> Daughter to Sir William Harbirt noble and hardy
> Erle of Pembroke, whose soulis God save,
> And with his grace consarve the builder of this tower."

The structure was probably intended for defence; now it might be used as a fishing or shooting lodge.

It is a pleasant road by which you return, along the side of the rippling Aln, under spreading branches where you will be at a loss which most to admire, the oak, birch, or beech, past rocky banks adorned with foxgloves, where a delicious spring tempts you to stop and drink, across broad openings—now enlivened by haymakers—catching varying views of park scenery. About half-an-hour's walking, and crossing a couple of bridges brings you to an ancient gateway, all that remains of Alnwick Abbey—the abbey founded by Eustace Fitz-John. It is a solid embrasured tower, pierced by a low flat arched gateway, above which are a niche, shields, and heavy transomed windows.

Now a hind inhabits it, and his garden is fenced off on one side, and all around spreads the smooth green pasture. No signs appear of the extent of the building which the founder erected for the good of his own soul and the souls of his predecessor Yvo and his living relatives. The Premonstratensian monks were doubtless not unwilling to say masses in payment for such comfortable quarters. The founder's son himself took the habit, and at his decease in 1184 was buried here by the side of his wife. Another of the line instituted prayers for the soul of Malcolm, King of Scotland, who was killed while besieging Alnwick in 1093, and of his son Edward. Malcolm's Spring, which is not far off, still perpetuates the name of the monarch. Portions of the ruin have been from time to time dug up, but nothing now breaks the level of the sward.

The Chronicle of Melrose recounts of a miraculous relic which was preserved here: the foot of Simon de Montfort, who fell at the battle of Evesham, and whose feet and hands wrought more than two hundred miracles. John de Vesci, who fought in the same field, brought with him the member, and it remained sound and uncorrupt for some months. A silver shoe was made in which it was enclosed, and happy was the cripple privileged to kiss the precious relic. A wealthy burgess of Newcastle, afflicted with an infirmity which left him scarcely able to crawl, was warned in a dream to betake himself to Alnwick Abbey, where the foot would work his cure; and when with much pain and difficulty he had come thither, he was cured by the mere sight of the silver shoe.

Here, too, some of the Percys, lords and ladies, were buried: some joined the fraternity; and in 1376, Henry de Percy dined here in the refectory with a company of

knights, while the common folk of the parish were fed in the cloisters to the number of one thousand and twenty. The abbots were important enough to be summoned to parliament in the reigns of the first two Edwards.

A little farther and we come to a lodge, and leaving the park, make our way to the dairy, there to admire the pleasant situation, the cleanliness, the well-kept animals, and the flowers. Hence we descend to the Lion bridge, and walk a little way up the Berwick road till we come to Malcolm's Cross, the memorial of a Scottish king who lost his life before Alnwick.

CHAPTER XIV.

Yielding to an inclination—Alnwick Moor—A Foolish Custom—Agricultural Transformations—What o'clock will it be ?—Claes and Bullets—A Crack with Keeper—Yon's Old Chivot—Wild Hills—Foxes and Fishing—Smugglers—An Invitation—Coquet-Dale—Weldon Brig—Brinkburn Priory—A Sparkling River—The Angler's Song—Rothbury—The Castle Quarry—A thickwalled Rectory—The Church and Bernard Gilpin—Prince Charlie's Head-quarters—A Pleasant Sojourn—The Lasses o' Coquet—Wetting a Bargain—Beasts and Brandy—How to judge of Northumberland—Old Simonside—Larbottle—A Northumbrian Village—Cottages—Boxbeds, Hinds, and Bondagers—Domestic Habits—Shabby Hovels—Improved Cottages—Callaly Castle—Eslington—Hospitable Reception—Scomfished Fishes—A Jolly Dinner—A Spur in the Head—Equestrian Trip to the Hills—Cheviot Sheep—Ingram—The Breamish—A Wicked Water—Ilderton—Twilight Walk.

WHILE at dinner a desire came over me to take once more the walk to Rothbury. It would be going away from the sea; but I had seen Alnmouth, and remembered its features, and the flats by the river where samphire grows, the isolated church-hill, on which once stood Woden's church, where bones lay bleaching, and human skulls grinning horribly from the loose sandy margin. A memorable place, interesting to the antiquary; for from that river-mouth the royal and episcopal deputation rowed forth in 684 to beseech St. Cuthbert to leave his poor retreat on the Farne, and become their bishop. So I let inclination have its way, leaving my return to the coast for after consideration.

It is a twelve miles' walk to Rothbury, up and down all the way across the hills that rise between the vales

of Aln and Coquet. You ascend at once from the town to Alnwick Moor, a height whence you can overlook the country for miles around. Hither the candidates for the freedom of the burgh used to come on St. Mark's day, clad in white, to wade through a muddy pond where, to make the ceremony the more impressive, they floundered perchance into a deep hole. The venerable custom, which is said to have been instituted by King John, and was quite worthy of that foolish monarch, actually lingered on into the present century.

What would Adam Smith or Arthur Young say if they could return and see how drainage and tillage are transforming the moorlands into fields of grain and potatoes, sour swamps into kindly pastures? Would they believe it possible that the farmer and the chemist, by taking counsel together, could so overcome the stubbornness of soil and the caprices of climate? Where is the surprising amelioration to end? Is it to go on until even the bleakest fells yield generous crops for man and beast, and famine and hunger become as obsolete as loyalty to the young Pretender? It would seem so, when we look at what cultivators are doing on Northumbrian hills, and north of the Tweed; ay, and north of the Tay, even up to John o' Groat's. And how cunningly they set about their work, making old Mother Earth mend her ways out of her own bosom! They dig down and find clay; they shape and burn this clay into gutters and drainpipes, which are put back into the ground; they dig down and bring to the surface the soil which has lain buried for thousands of years, and the sun, and the air, and the plough, and the harrow do the rest. And these are the jolterheads over whom your white-faced Cockney makes merry.

"What o'clock will it be?" asked a little boy, with

that Northumbrian propensity which substitutes the present tense by the future.

He expressed himself glad to hear that it was half-past four, for he had sat there ever since six o'clock in the morning minding two horses; and "wasn't going to get nought for it."

I sympathised; and asked what he would do if he had money?

"Buy claes."

"And what would you do with a halfpenny?"

"Buy bullets."

I remembered the time when I liked bull's-eyes myself, and made him supremely happy with a penny.

I was heedful of the plots, and fields, and the tilery, when a passing vehicle suddenly stopped, and a voice said, "How far are you going?" I looked round, answered, and was invited to a seat in the phäeton, with, "I can put you on about three miles." I soon discovered that Keeper, as I shall call him, really did, as he said, "like to have a crack;" and was very willing to communicate his topographical knowledge. He knew every acre of the country for miles around; all the short cuts across the fells, all the fox covers; and when I mentioned Yeavering Bell, it appeared that he knew all about the Cheviots. "Yon's old Chivot," he said, pointing with his whip; "that biggest hill;" then presently, as other summits rose to view, and with enthusiasm, "There, you's Yeavering Bell. Hey, mon; but it's beautiful out there!"

The three miles were soon passed, and we came to the road where he should turn off for Whittingham (Whitt'njum). He drew rein for a moment; then, saying half to himself, "Well, it won't be fifty miles out of my way if I put ye on a bit further," he kept

on towards Rothbury. Every hill, as we advanced, looked wilder and barer than the last; and though the green spots might be widening round the farms here and there in the hollows, one could hardly believe that those rugged and stony slopes will ever pay tribute to Ceres. At times we crossed deep gullies in which the burn that dashed along below, was all but hidden by the dense scrub growing on the precipitous flanks; and of all such places Keeper has a word to say; for they remind him of fox hunts, and trout caught in rocky pools and gravelly shallows; and he recalled his adventures with the tone of one who enjoys out-door sports to the utmost. He knew, moreover, that in former days troops of smugglers used to come over the Border with whisky from Scotland, and travel by secret ways among the hills and across the fells to a spot near the settled districts, where they dispersed, each man with his load, to seek their customers. "Ah! but when government made the duties equal in the two countries, it soon put a stop to that game."

Then he tells me where he lives: how that Alewater (the Aln) flows through the park close by; that if I will call at his house on my way to Yeavering Bell, I shall have a taste of Alewater trout. I am to be sure to call, for he likes a crack.

And so, full of talk, we came to where the "mid-road" from Newcastle to Edinburgh crosses ours, and there we drank a glass of beer and parted. "Mind you come," he cried, as he drove quickly away to the north. I was now about four miles from Rothbury, and the same from the most beautiful ecclesiastical ruin in Northumberland—Brinkburn Priory. It would double the distance to go round that way; but there was a long evening before me.

This time my walk was not solitary, for the road was alive with flocks of lambs on their way to be sold at Long Framlington fair. In about an hour we look into the vale of Coquet; and truly we may liken the river to a Naiad worthy of her name, and soon we are at the bridge and inn well known to anglers, many of whom can sing—

> "At Weldon Brig there's wale o' wine,
> If ye hae coin in pocket;
> If ye can thraw a heckle fine,
> There's wale o' trouts in Coquet."

But as we are not anglers, we travel up the road towards Rothbury, and taking the river-side path at the foot of an ascent, enjoy a delightful walk by the side of the stream, till we are shut in by wooded heights, and the river makes a quick curve, above which the southern bank rises high and precipitous, an amphitheatre of foliage, while on the north a low green tongue of land rushes forward into the hollow, and on that embosomed by trees, stands the ruin. It is a place where rock, wood, and water exert their fascination; though it must be confessed that the charm would be the greater were Mr. Cadogan's house out of sight of the ruin: the sentiment of the place would be more impressive with greater solitude. Nevertheless, when shut in by the old walls, we can meditate undisturbed.

He who selected Brinkburn as the site of a religious house, had an eye for the picturesque, and a heart for the contemplative. William Bertram second Baron of Mitford, of that family who from the time of the Conquest held the castles of Mitford and Bothal, was the founder, in the reign of Henry I. The stream which turned the mill where the monks ground their

corn, still flows in a narrow straight cut across the level. Bell Pool, the deep hole where the bells were lost, is still to be seen in the river, fragments of hoary walls still show where stood the monastic buildings and offices; and the church with its square tower, slender-pointed turret at one corner, its combination of round and pointed arches, marking a period of transition, makes up a charming picture. Turner found it out, and gave it a place among his *Views*.

The style of the ornament is Norman, such as prevailed, so say the antiquaries, at the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth century; and the details are as well worth study as the general effect. Various points of view can be found which reveal the glory of architecture, assisted by the evening shadows; and what with the admirable door-ways, the narrow lancet windows, the ivy on the tower colonised by jackdaws, the ferns, grasses, and weeds that beautify the weather-worn masonry, and the environment of bosky hills, the impression made on the mind is one that memory gladly recalls.

But we have to finish our walk. The drive running up the hill leads to the road, and there we get charming views of the dale, backed by the dark heights of old Simonside. We see the river below us on the left: we pass Brinkburn Weel; we pass the Ironwork, which seems out of place in so sylvan a spot; we pass the Thrum, a rocky rapid known to anglers, and we see enough of the sparkling stream to enable us to sympathise with the angler, where he sings:—

"Nae mair we'll fish the coaly Tyne,
Nae mair the oozy Team,
Nae mair we'll try the sedgy Pont,
Or Derwent's woody stream;

> But we'll awa' to Coquet-side,
> For Coquet bangs them a',
> Whose winding streams sae sweetly glide,
> By Brinkburn's bonny Ha'!"

Arrived at Rothbury, I secured quarters at the *Three Half Moons*, and rambled the time away till after sunset, in pleasurable recognition of half-forgotten scenes: up the hill on the Alnwick road, to get a view of Crag End, a grand range of cliffs, grim and rugged, the edge of a dreary waste bestrewn with rocks and boulders. It is there that the large bright slabs were quarried, which we saw on the stair at Alnwick Castle. Then across the bridge, and up the southern bank to Whitton Tower, an ancient peel, with walls seven feet thick, now the rectory, but with modern additions that render it commodious, and a pretty garden around. The view of the village seen as you descend, lying open on the declivity, the dark hills around, among which old Simonside rises in massy grandeur, and the bright river below will win your admiration.

The attractions of Rothbury are well-known to Northumbrians. The town itself, chiefly one long wide street, retains sundry rude touches of the past; miserable thatched cots, which set off the ambitious style of the newest houses. The green at the upper end is adorned by ash-trees and sycamores: the church, which has undergone restoration, reminds us of good Bernard Gilpin; for he used to preach there in days ere church-goers had ceased to interrupt the service by brawls and deadly fights. The good man had once to descend from the pulpit to make peace between his turbulent hearers. The stem of the font, curiously carved, is perhaps seven hundred years old; a relic of the times when Rothbury belonged to the Barons of Warkworth.

More than once during their rising in behalf of Prince Charlie, the Northumbrian Jacobites made Rothbury their head-quarters: out-of-the-way places suiting them best. The Reiver's Well, which we pass in a stroll by the river side, is another memorial of the olden time.

There is a cheerfulness about the landscape notwithstanding the want of trees. Hills afford shelter and commanding prospects; and what is more, Rothbury ranks among the most healthy parishes in the kingdom. To this fact the Registrar-General bears testimony; to say nothing of patients who have sojourned here for a while, drunk goats' milk, walked up and down the valley to all the pleasant places, or held picnics on Simonside, and have gone home renewed in life and vigour. And if there be any truth in the song, other allurements are not lacking:—

> "The lasses of Tyne, who fearlessly shine,
> Are mirrors of modesty too:
> The lasses of Coquet put all in the pocket:
> Go all to Coquet and woo."

I was lingering over my last cup of tea, when two villagers came in to fulfil a time-honoured custom—that of wetting a bargain. One had to pay the other for a load of hay, and he could not do it comfortably without whisky. The North holds to the ancient customs with much steadfastness, and to an extent that surprises a Southerner. "I ha' sellt my seventeen beasts," said a Cumbrian grazier to a neighbour on his way home: "I ha' gotten the money in my pocket, and seventeen glasses o' brandy in my bally." Presently the landlord joined the party; fresh glasses were ordered; and in the talk that followed, I amused them not a little by the story of what befell me in

Allendale. Could it be possible! They felt themselves somewhat scandalised by such a manifestation within their own county, and one wound up his remarks with, "I wish you'd write a letter to the *Newcastle Journal*, and make them folk up in Allendale ashamed o' themselves." And they hoped that I would judge of Northumberland by my experience on the road from Alnwick.

About a mile west of the village, a crossroad leads you up a long steep hill away from the valley of the Coquet, and with every furlong the view grows wider, till at last you see gleams of the river for miles, and the broad rugged slopes of Simonside rushing up to a height of 1401 feet. I found it delightful the next morning to turn from time to time and gaze on the scene, remembering my former walk to Elsdon across the lonely moors, and my rambles on the huge hill. Though sometimes mistaken for Cheviot by a gazer in the south, it is a hill of an irregular varied form, not rounded in outline as that which gives its name to Chevy Chase; but picturesque with crags, and sudden ridges, and hollows, on which the clouds produce magical effects of light and shade. It is a hill on which you may wander for a whole day, and in clear weather behold from the summit the whole length of the country, from the Scottish border to Tynemouth.

Our road is bordered by hedges and trees, and passes between fields of oats and barley, even on the high table-land which crowns the hill, wherein we have a contrast with the landscape beyond Rothbury. Larbottle shows us a specimen of a Northumbrian village: small cottages, each of a single room, built close together on three sides of an oblong square; an arrangement not at all pretty, but favourable to soci-

ality and to the accumulation of sweepings and rubbish cast out by the several tenants. We shall see more of such settlements before our travel is over, and with as little admiration for the last as for the first, perhaps less.

By and by, the lane ends in a sheep-run, where the short grass is patched by whins and brambles of Nature's own planting. Here stands a lone cottage, around which, even in summer, the winds are boisterous. 'Tis not a cheerful-looking cottage; it retains the mediæval abstinence from daylight, with niggard casements, while the door fits so badly, that you may put your hand into the chinks, through which the wind finds its way with lusty howl. Inside you see a rough stone floor, a grate with a coal fire, a woman ironing her cap borders at a table under the window, and in the rear two large box-beds. Imagine a couple of berths from the steerage of a ship inclosed in moveable closets made of deal or fir, and you will see the box-bed of the hind of Northumberland. In those stifling recesses they, their wives and children, and the "bondager" sleep; in the same room in which they live and take their meals. It is well perhaps that the door should not fit closely.

This free and easy style of domestic life, may have suited Arcadia and the golden age, but it seems hardly compatible with our busy iron age. However, we must not forget that civilisation has not yet grown to full age in this northernmost of English counties; nor the stubbornness of habit. Here in Northumberland the hind—as the farm-labourer is called—is hired by the year upon terms, or "conditions," to use the local word, expressed in a formal written agreement. His master finds him a cottage and garden, keep for a cow,

"leads" his coal; that is, lends a horse and cart to fetch coal, supplies him with wheat, rye, barley, peas, a given weight of wool, and a thousand yards of potatoes measured along the ridge; but in actual money he gets usually not more than four pounds. The total value of his year's income may be set down as from thirty-five to forty pounds, which is below the rate of wages in some counties south of the Tyne. His supply of food is amply sufficient for his wants, and we have it on good authority—Mr. Grey, of Dilstone—that he does not deny himself joints of meat.

As a class the hinds are industrious and well-conducted; not slow to see the advantages of education, or to send their children to school. But they are migratory, and obstinate to maintain their rights; and will spend twenty shillings in moving miles away to a new place, for a difference of ten shillings in the year's wages.

It is a local custom, one deeply rooted, that every hind shall provide a "bondager" for his master's service, at the rate of tenpence or a shilling a day, according to season. This bondager is commonly a girl or young woman; the hind's daughter, if he have one old enough; if not, he must hire one. She becomes one of his household, depending on him for food and lodging, and when, as sometimes happens, there is no work in the fields, he must still keep her, and she hangs about at home, sewing a little for herself if she can. As regards housework, the testimony concerning her is, that she is not fond of it, or of offering to assist the wife.

A large party of these bondagers at work in the fields, hoeing turnips, is a remarkable sight for a stranger. At times, they may be seen standing on the

midden and loading the dung-cart. Coarse, blowzy girls, most of them wearing a blue gown, and a kerchief on the head; but see them on Sundays, and you would wonder at their showy imitation of fashionable dress, manifested in the boldest of colours. They work from six in the morning till six in the evening, and during their dinner-hour you may sometimes see them romping, but commonly they betake themselves to the nearest path or road-side, and there lie down to look at the passers-by. They appear to be contented enough, notwithstanding their designation—"bondagers." How that word sets one thinking of serfdom! I remember my first sight of bondagers; it was soon after sunrise one morning at Alnwick, when I saw thirty or forty washing their hands and faces in the pant—public fountain in the market-place; and there within view of the castle, it seemed to me a relic of the feudal ages. But after all, though called bondagers the life of the girls is not one of bondage: they are simply hired servants.

Habit, it is said, has reconciled the hind's wife to the presence of another woman in the habitation, sleeping in the next box, sharing the space which is at once dressing-room, dining-room, and kitchen; but if the wives could have their own way, the habit would, no doubt, soon be changed. There has been at times cause for jealousy, the hind has proved himself unfaithful; but such instances, as I was informed on diligent inquiry, are rare. In this respect, Northumbrian morals may compare favourably with the results of what is known as the "bothy system" in the west of Scotland.

One reason assigned for the use of the box-beds is that the cottages used to be so windy, and the roofs so

leaky, that the protection of the box was necessary to insure dryness and warmth. In some cottages, the beds serve as a partition between the family and the cow-stall; and there is a story told of a cow being seized with the gad, and butting a bed over on the floor during the night. It is quite true that the cottages inhabited by the fathers of the present generation were miserable hovels; in some instances nothing but a gable standing on the ground, as may still be seen in out-of-the-way places, and of those built in later years too many are wretched-looking places. See an empty cottage before the hind has brought in his lumbering box-beds, his press, his chairs, and table, before he has set up his grate in the empty fire-place, or fitted his window to the empty hole in the wall, and you will think it not good enough for a stable. Yet, in such places families are reared, and Mr. Grey says, that if you "look into one of our north-country cottages during a winter's evening, you will probably see assembled the family group round a cheerful coal fire; you will see the females knitting or spinning; the father, perhaps, mending shoes, an art which almost all acquire; and one of the young ones reading for the amusement of the whole circle."

There is, however, one particular in which neither hind nor labourer is clever—he cannot describe a route. In every instance that I asked the way of a rustic in Northumberland, he sent me wrong; not, I believe, wilfully, but because knowing the way so well himself, he failed to recognise the difficulties which would inevitably betray a stranger. As a German philosopher would say, he looks at the question subjectively, and not objectively.

It was felt within the county itself that to expect a

labourer to huddle his family into a miserable hovel was a denial of fair play which the nineteenth century could not well tolerate; so, an association was formed for the building of improved cottages, and the Duke of Northumberland, Earl Grey on his estate at Howick, and the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital, and other proprietors have had cottages built with an upper floor, and with due regard to light, air, and cheerfulness, as well as to decency. Such however is the force of habit, that some families still preferred sleeping all together in the kitchen, to going to-bed up stairs.

What a happy thing it is that Nature will have the species perpetuated, and in full vigour, whether or not! Looking at the tall strong forms of the Northumbrian cottagers, you would not believe them subject to such unfavourable circumstances during sleep; they are living examples of what fieldwork, fresh air, sunshine, and a sufficiency of food can accomplish. Some years ago it was noticed that the ranks of the Northumberland militia covered more ground than any other in the service.

I have not been standing still all this time, but have walked from cottage to cottage, seeing in each the same arrangements, and here and there remarkable cleanliness. One woman whom I found also ironing her cap-borders, said there would be no bearing the house were it not kept very clean.

About two hours from Rothbury the view opens towards the north, a wooded country backed by the smooth masses of the Cheviots; and the lane ends in a turnpike road. Away on the right is Callaly Castle—an old tower, and a country seat, one of those places where the builders had to contend against the uncanny folk. Build as they would on the hill-top

during the day, the work was always undone in the night: as runs the rhyme—

> "Callaly Castle stands up on the height,
> Up by the day, and down at night:
> Set it down yon shepherd's haugh,
> There it shall stand and never fa'."

Eslington, lying in a hollow away from the road, is one of the places that must be sought with the tongue as well as the eye. There are a few low pantiled cottages on the edge of a park, and one of these standing by itself in a flower-garden opened its door to my tapping, and "So you *are* come," from Keeper's voice, assured me that I had been expected. As dinner was not quite ready we strolled into the park, looked at the broods of young pheasants, at the deer that kept timidly on the skirts of the wood on the farther slopes, at the Aln, here a mountain brook flowing through the park, and the place was pointed out where the trout had been caught which we were presently to eat. Near by is a large pond, once populous with fins, but owing to the long drought they were now "a' scomfished" with the thick green slime, and yet that pond used to be "as clean and smooth as a seeing-glass." Then we passed the mansion, to which Lord Ravensworth pays a visit during the shooting season, and looked at the gardens where the flowers, fruit, and rare shrubs seem the more delightful when contrasted with the bleak fells which are not far off.

What a jolly dinner we had! Ale-water trout are a treat; and you would think nothing could be better till you had tasted the Cheviot mutton that followed; and which to place first, the peas, potatoes, or cauliflowers of Eslington, would puzzle you; especially when good ale and sherry are at hand to assist your

judgment. If Keeper did not have a crack to his heart's content, it certainly was not my fault. Those unhappy people who find it hard to dine on a thousand a-year, might have envied us. We talked till the lengthening shadows marked the approach of evening; and not without a little violence to the strenuous hospitality did I get leave to continue my walk to Wooler, of which by far the longer half remained to be accomplished.

Even then it was not to be my way. The boy was ordered to saddle a horse: then I must take a stirrup-cup, just one more before starting, and my plea about the distance to Wooler was overruled by "Hey, mon, a spur in the head is worth two on the heel." Then I mounted, and away we went, Keeper leading on foot, across fields, skirting pastures, along bits of ragged bridle-road, up and down, the shortest course to the hills. I had put many questions about Cheviot and his satellites, and my entertainer, as I may well call him, had planned an excursion to the edge of the range for my gratification. Soon we saw the swelling eminences rolling smoothly away to the higher summits in the rear, verifying the couplet:—

> "Though Cheviot's top be frosty yet,
> He's green belaw the knee:"

and I fancied the horse enjoyed treading the soft green turf of Ryle Hill, on the top of which we made a brief halt. The view is eminently pastoral; miles of short sweet grass, dotted with sheep and patched here and there with bracken. Your Cheviot sheep is a gentleman among the fleeces: he has a pleasing open countenance; his disposition is sprightly; he is a good judge of grass and air, and does not mind wandering

a few miles in search of proper diet. Moreover, he is patriotic; and when an attempt was made some years ago to get him to colonise Crossfell, he would in no wise be persuaded to accept the change. For this I do not blame him. Who wants to go and live on Crossfell?

Every height has its name: Camp Hill—we crossed it, and passed through the camp—Church, Old Fawdon, Chubden, and others dear to the Northumbrian heart. The shepherd panting far away on the scorching plains of Australia, thinks regretfully of the pleasant green slopes of Cheviot, and their sparkling rills.

Another hour of pleasant ups and downs brought us within sight of Ingram, or Ing-ram, as the natives pronounce it; a lonely village of which, as it seemed to me in the distance, the manse is bigger than the church. Here we crossed the Breamish, a stream which a few miles lower changes its name to Till. "Hey, mon, it's a wicked water," said Keeper in reply to my remark about the width of the stony bed, as the horse splashed through the shallow current; yet though furious in time of flood the Breamish is a generous stream for the angler. Perhaps I had better not tell how many dozen trout have been taken from it by a single rod in the course of a forenoon.

Then I dismounted; Keeper instructed me how to find the way to Wooler seven miles distant, along the fringe of the hills, and springing into the saddle, was soon out of sight. I had to follow a byeway across large hilly barley-fields, for here the plough encroaches on the pastures, into a district remarkable for the excellence of its agriculture. By and by there was a descent into a romantic dell, where a lively burn and

pretty woods create a pleasant surprise. At Ilderton, a village on a hill-top, the villagers sat in little groups about their doors, enjoying a quiet chat in the gloaming. The clock struck nine, the shadows grew broader and darker, and the hills rose black and solemn on my left, while I walked the last three miles to my resting-place at the *Black Bull* at Wooler.

CHAPTER XV.

Wooler, a Rustic Metropolis—Historical Neighbourhood—Scott in the Cheviots—Reason for drinking Goats' whey—The top of Cheviot—Northumbrian Agriculture—Improvements—Economy of Wheels—Glorious Turnips—Backend—How to grow Turnips—Clever Operations—Yeavering Bell—A Steep Climb—Windy Summit—Druids or Saxons?—Paulinus the Missionary—Good Fights in Olden Time—Thomson's Winter—Sir Guy and the Dragon—Faws and Muggers—A Northumbrian Bard—Lilburne—Breamish and Till—Chillingham—Hospitable Steward—Ancient Mansion—The Toad-stone—Learning in Latin—An Interpretation—The Wild Cattle—Stalking—A Sight of the Herd—A Hint to move—Beauty of Kine—Danger—Pugnacious Calves—Tossing a Keeper—Shooting a Bull—Wild Hill-Top—The Three Dogs—Black Waste—Ugly Farm-place—Belford.

WOOLER is such a town as you would expect to see in the heart of the county, decidedly rustic, with roofs of thatch here and there to temper aspiring notions, with shops that remind you of the days of George III., but yet with indications of homely prosperity. The parson preached in a thatched church till it was burnt down about a hundred years ago. With two thousand inhabitants it is an important metropolis, drawing folk to its fairs and markets from miles around, and, as I saw, careful to send its boys and girls to school.

Invalids used to resort to Wooler for the goats' whey cure; though less agreeable than Rothbury, it is not devoid of attraction. The Till flows past at the foot of the hill; historical sites throng the neighbourhood: Hedgeley Moor, the scene of Sir Ralph the Loyal's fatal skirmish with Lord Montacute,

and Yeavering Bell, and other memorable places to be presently enumerated, are all within a morning's walk.

It was at the Whitsun Tryste, or Wooler sheep fair, that Scott's grandfather spent his old shepherd's thirty pounds in buying a horse instead of sheep, but with such happy results in the sequel. And Scott himself came hither, as he relates in a letter written to his friend Clerk, in August, 1791, from which I may perhaps borrow a passage without fear of reproof. "Behold a letter from the mountains," he writes; "for I am very snugly settled here, in a farmer's house, about six miles from Wooler, in the very centre of the Cheviot hills, in one of the wildest and most romantic situations which your imagination, fertile upon the subject of cottages, ever suggested. 'And what the deuce are you about there?' methinks I hear you say. Why, sir, of all things in the world, drinking goats' whey; not that I stand in the least need of it, but my uncle having a slight cold, and being a little tired of home, asked me last Sunday evening if I would like to go with him to Wooler; and I answering in the affirmative, next morning's sun beheld us on our journey through a pass in the Cheviots, upon the backs of two special nags, and man Thomas behind with a portmanteau, and two fishing-rods fastened across his back, much in the style of St. Andrew's cross. Upon reaching Wooler we found the accommodation so bad that we were forced to use some interest to get lodgings here, where we are most delightfully appointed indeed. To add to my satisfaction we are amidst places renowned by the feats of former days; each hill is crowned with a tower, or camp, or cairn; and in no situation can you be near more fields of battle:—Flodden, Otter-

burn, and Chevy Chase, Ford Castle, Chillingham Castle, Copland Castle, and many another scene of blood are within the compass of a forenoon's ride. Out of the brooks with which these hills are intersected, we pull trouts of half a yard in length, as fast as we did the perches from the pond at Pennicuik, and we are in the very country of muirfowl. * * *

"My uncle drinks the whey here, as I do ever since I understood it was brought to his bedside every morning at six, by a very pretty dairymaid. So much for my residence. All the day we shoot, fish, walk, and ride; dine and sup on fish struggling from the stream, and the most delicious heath-fed mutton, barn-door fowls, poys (pies), milk-cheese, &c., all in perfection; and so much simplicity resides amongst these hills, that a pen, which could write at least, was not to be found about the house, though belonging to a considerable farmer, till I shot the crow with whose quill I write this epistle."

In this passage we have an interesting glimpse of what Northumberland was nearly seventy years ago, and of the famous author enjoying a holiday while yet reading for the law, and before fame began to blow her trumpet in his praise.

A bright, breezy morning favoured my contemplated excursion to Yeavering Bell, five miles from Wooler. Most visitors choose to ascend old Cheviot himself, but I have found that the highest hills do not command the most pleasing views; moreover the top of Cheviot is flat and boggy, with no wider prospect in some parts than could be got in a hollow on the low grounds. When the Ordnance Survey began their observations on the summit, the theodolite was found to sink half an inch every day, for three or four weeks, and was only

steadied at last by digging down through the spongy soil to the solid gravel, nine feet below, and driving in piles.

The road runs through a district of which Northumbrian farmers are proud, and not without reason. While the belt of land between Warkworth and Berwick is the best part of the county for wheat, this central region, extending from Whittingham to Wooler and northward to the Tweed, is the best for turnips. In the cultivation of this root these men of the North have shown themselves not less enterprising and successful than their mining and manufacturing brethren on the Tyne. The spirit of improvement appears to have been aroused about ninety years ago; leagues of ling were uprooted, drains were dug, and once that the virtue of lime was known, farmers did not hesitate to send their carts even forty miles for a supply of that warm fertiliser. Landlords encouraged the improvements by a grant of twenty-one years' leases; thrashing-machines were set up; the old clumsy ploughs, and the harrows with tines made of the tough wood of the broom, disappeared; and rents ceased to be paid in kind or in labour.

Now the Northumbrian farmer reaps eighty-two bushels of oats to the acre, which formerly produced but fifteen, and finds his once poor nine bushels of wheat to the acre, multiplied seven-fold. He makes use of the best implements, drives his thrashing-machine by steam or water-power, and uses a pair of coarse mill-stones besides to bruise grain for his pigs and horses. And being an economist, and knowing that he seldom wants to employ all his carts at the same time, he keeps no more than two sets of wheels, and shifts them from cart to cart at pleasure.

But his glory hereabouts is the turnip. He gives it

fair play. In our walk from Ingram yesterday we passed fields of twenty, thirty, forty acres, all turnips. Some fields there are of sixty acres; and if it is an interesting sight to see a hundred reapers at work in a wheatfield, so is it interesting to watch the operations in the turnipfield. Let us devote a few minutes thereto, good-natured reader, while we walk; it will perhaps elevate our opinion of the agriculturist.

We must suppose the land to have been limed "at backend," as the hinds say—backend, or latter end, being the term for autumn—and ploughed and ploughed again, and kept as clean and mellow as possible. About the end of May all hands are set to the sowing; and in this operation the farmer shows a clever division of labour. A detachment of ploughs begins early in the morning to lay the land in ridges; the manure cart comes immediately after, followed by the most active and knowing hind on the farm, who, with a hack or hoe prong, draws out the manure, letting more or less fall into the furrows as needed, as the cart moves on: a task that requires quick judgment. No sooner is the cart empty than another takes its place, and a detachment of carts is kept going between the field and the midden. In the rear of this clever hind follows a troop of women—bondagers, who spread the manure evenly in the furrows; behind them comes another detachment of ploughs, reversing the furrows, and covering the manure; behind the ploughs comes the sowing machine, making the drills, dropping the seed, and rolling the ground smooth in once passing over it. And so, from eight to twelve acres are twice ploughed, manured, sown, and smoothed in a day; and the larger the farm the better the work goes on, by reason of the abundance of hands and implements.

A sufficient width is allowed between the rows for the after-operations. The manure gives the plants so vigorous a start that they commonly suffer but little from the fly; and boys and bondagers are soon set to work with the hoe. Then a small plough is sent between the rows, to turn down the weeds; then a scuffler to stir the earth; then come the boys and bondagers once more with their hoes; then another plough follows, which heaps up the earth on each side of the furrow; and after that the crop may be left to the rain and sunshine. But some farmers hold that the more you keep "the irons" going between the rows, until the leaves meet and cover, the better. The result is shown in a produce of from twenty-five to twenty-eight tons of turnips to the acre, cleaned of top and root.

Yeavering Bell, a graceful cone, stands out from the hilly range on our left to a height of 1172 feet. I got over the first gate that afforded access, crossed the rough pasture and scrub at the foot of the slope, and then had a long steep climb through fern and heath, and across screes to the summit, choosing the shortest way. The nearer the top the harder the task; for the wind, already brisk below, came rushing down with such violence that I could scarcely keep my footing, and had now and then to submit to a roll. And when I reached the brow, it was as if something almost solid pushed me back, and I had fairly to grapple the ground. It was tremendous. Henceforth I shall believe that a man may be carried off his legs by concentrated zephyrs. After two or three trials I succeeded in getting to the cairn, and sat down on the sheltered side; but even there the blast was fierce, and howled through the great pile of stones as through the rigging of a

ship in a gale. To walk about and explore was out of the question, so I shrunk up as small as possible, and made such use of my eyes as circumstances would permit.

The summit of the hill is a sloping plateau of considerable extent, interesting to antiquaries, because of the remains of rude walls still to be seen around the margin. Whatever their purpose, the walls were surprisingly thick, built of whinstone slabs; and within them are traces of smaller inclosures, and of pavement. The quantity of stone used must have been prodigious, and we can but wonder at the laborious industry of primeval days. Whether the walls were built for defence or for worship is a question which learned antiquaries have not yet been able to decide. Ad Gebrin, they tell us, was the name of the hill in Saxon days; one argues for Bel-ad-Gebrin, and a temple for Saxon worship, while another refers the works to the Druids.

I tried again and again to examine these relics, but found it impossible to keep my ground except on hands and knees, so had to return to my seat by the cairn. Broad and fair spreads the view to the north and west, hill after hill, field after field, away into Scotland; the ridge of Flodden is in sight, about five miles distant; nearer, Copland Castle rises among the trees; and the Glen flows past with frequent curves to join the Till, the stream in which Paulinus baptised his converts, during his sojourn of thirty-six days at Yeavering with King Edwin and his queen, whom he had persuaded to embrace the Christian faith.

Were it worth while, we might recall the stirring incidents which inspired the old chronicler to write—"The Englysshemenne and the Skottes are mighty menne of warre, and whenever they meete there is a

good fyghte withoute sparynge;" how that Sir Robert Umfraville, with sevenscore spears and three hundred bows, defeated four thousand Scots, and chased them twelve miles into their own country; how that Sir William Bulmer, at the head of the Bishop of Durham's troops, discovered a Scottish force hidden in the thickets of broom, and put them to rout. Or, looking westwards, we may remember that there are the hills of Wideopen and Crookedshaws, from which Thomson drew some of his winter scenes, and the quiet glen in which he once sojourned; that in Linton parish once lived the hideous and cruel Worm—a terror to the neighbourhood for miles around—which, perhaps, was the dragon that Sir Guy of Warwick, that valiant knight, journeyed to Northumberland to encounter, and slew, and carried its head on his spear to King Athelstan at Lincoln; that two hours' walking westwards would bring us in sight of Yetholm Loch, and the winter metropolis of the gipsies, and the region of the once-dreaded faws and muggers.

Story, a Northumbrian bard, whose songs have been published at the cost of the Duke, sings—

> "My Harp was made from stunted tree,
> The growth of Glendale's barest lea;
> Yet fresh as prouder stems it grew,
> And drank with leaf as green the dew;
> Bright showers, from Till or Beaumont shed,
> Its roots with needful moisture fed;
> Gay birds, Northumbrian skies that wing,
> Amid its branches loved to sing;
> And purple Cheviot's breezy air
> Kept up a life-like quivering there."

To the south and east the view ranges across a maze of hill-tops, all partaking of the peculiar rounded form, but varied in colour by heather and grass and the

shadows of the clouds. However, I could only snatch hasty peeps in that direction, for the wind was blinding.

I had thought of returning to Wooler across the hills; but where would be the pleasure of a struggle? So retracing my steps, I found, about one-third of the way down, a lull in the wind, as if the current with a rebound there made a bend upwards, leaving a zone of the slope in calm; but sweeping to the ground again, as I felt near the bottom.

Having dined, I started afresh towards the South, deferring my visit to Flodden till I get into the vale of Tweed. About three miles on the road to Alnwick, I turned in at Lilburne lodge, walked down the pretty avenue, saw a bit of a wall—a relic of Lilburne Tower—on a knoll, and passing from the far end of the grounds, took the lane for Chillingham. An hour between hedgerows brought me to a river, the Till, which, as we may remember, is only the Breamish, that wicked water, under an altered name. The change takes place at the next bridge above, as described in the local rhyme—

> "The foot o' Breamish and the head o' Till
> Meet together at Bewick Mill."

The ground rises from the stream in a bold slope, and a few minutes of ascent bring us to the entrance of a noble park, the seat of the Earl of Tankerville. The roads about are well kept; and the cottages and the school children show signs of being cared for. An old woman, who sat at her door knitting, directed me where to find Mr. Hardy, the steward: I should see a house in a nice garden at the foot of the hill; that was it; but it would be best for me to go round to the back door.

I had no introduction; but my request for permission

to see the wild cattle was at once granted. Mr. Hardy said he would send up one of his shepherds with me; there was, however, no shepherd within call; could I wait a few minutes? He and Mrs. Hardy were just going to tea; would I take a cup with them? Who could refuse such spontaneous hospitality? Not I. Before tea was over he changed his mind about seeking a shepherd, and said he would go up the park with me himself; and we might get a peep at the castle on the way.

It is an ancient park, dating from the thirteenth century, perhaps earlier. The oldest part of the castle was built in the reign of Henry III., and the family of the Greys held it until by the marriage of the heiress, daughter of Ford, Lord Grey, with Lord Ossulston, it became a possession of the Tankervilles.

The courtyard, with its offices on two sides, and the long flight of steps, the curious balustrades, the arched openings, and many small windows on the third, realises to the eye a castellated mansion of the olden time. The dining-room looks out on the pleasance and fine wooded slopes in the rear; the drawing-room contains not a few curiosities, cabinets, portraits, paintings, among which is one piece of old china that belonged to the unhappy Marie Antoinette: all seen under the heavy gloom which we associate with a baronial edifice. One of the paintings, a picturesque tower at Dunstanborough, heightened my desire to visit the ruin. Then we mounted to the leads, where you see the quadrangular form of the edifice, with a tower at each corner and embrasured parapets. There is a good view of the park, and the country in front across the valley of the Till, while at the foot appear the gardens with their pretty flower-plots, and the American ground with its plum-pudding tree, and remarkable lime, beehive-shaped.

In a spare room on the ground floor Mr. Hardy showed me the slab in which, though it had once formed part of a chimney-piece, a living toad was found on sawing it in two. The cavity remains well defined and smooth, and was no doubt a snug fit for the prisoner. I have read of a mason who, on building a wall at Bamborough, inclosed a toad in a small chamber within it; and there the creature was found alive and sufficiently vigorous to crawl away and conceal itself, on the opening of a gap in the wall sixteen years afterwards. The Chillingham stone must have been regarded as a wonderful thing; for two Latin inscriptions were cut to commemorate it in the chimney-breast, which magnified the phenomenon beyond all others. Long did they puzzle scholars and antiquaries, until at a recent meeting held round that horseshoe table which we saw at Newcastle, Lord Ravensworth read a translation which is believed to be accurate. I give one of the two by way of curiosity:—

Ho, Stagyrite!
If you wish for something more wonderful
Than your own Euripus,
Come hither!
Let the tides flow and ebb, and be he moonstricken
Who robs Trivia of her (due) honour.
Lo, for you something novel, which Africa bears not,
Nor Nile on his sandy shores,
(To wit) fire and pure flame,
Yet without vital air.
Out of the dark recess of the cleft rock,
As much as you see, the hands
Of the midwife stonecutter gave light
To a live toad.

The author of the inscriptions is supposed to have been Dr. Cosin, who was made Bishop of Durham in 1660.

It was literally up the park that we had to go next; and so rapid is the acclivity, that the castle, though

situate at a considerable elevation, appears as if in a hollow when seen from above; and what with its hilly surface, woods, and thickets, the park has a wild picturesqueness in addition to other charms. Its highest corner is locally known as Ros Castle. In a low corner stands the small old church, with tombs of the Greys. Some historians say that Chillingham was the southern extremity of the great Caledonian forest, in which wild cattle had roamed from time immemorial, and they quote a description from Boethius; probably the kine of the Ottadini and the Picts long before the Roman invasion. And it is thought that the herd now kept at Chillingham is a remnant of that ancient stock, the original British breed: their history however, till about the middle of last century, is entirely traditionary. There were once herds in Yorkshire and Staffordshire; but these have died out, and the herd at Hamilton, the northern extremity of the great forest, have degenerated into quiet well-behaved kine.

In the summer the animals keep to the highest and least-frequented part of the park. We had gone nearly a mile from the castle when Mr. Hardy enjoined caution: the cattle might be in the open beyond the plantation before us, and if they scented or heard our approach, would take to flight. The wind was blowing towards us; so, stooping, we crept cautiously among the trees, and peeping from behind the stems on the farther side, we saw about forty of the cattle lying down. The time and circumstances were eminently favourable; for as the ground rose gently from the edge of the trees, they were distinctly pictured against the green; bulls, cows, and calves in peaceful groups. They are smaller than the ordinary breeds of cattle, and have no colour except a touch of red inside the ears, and about the muzzle,

and a black tip to the horns: all the rest is white; and for mane the bulls have only a stripe of coarser hair along the neck, which is not seen at a little distance. A large pair of horns that seemed to grow from the ground puzzled me at first, till a whisper informed me that they belonged to a steer whose body was concealed by the swell of the ground.

After I had satisfied my curiosity, Mr. Hardy struck a tree with his stick, as a hint to the beasts to get up and walk, that I might see them in motion; one of the cows pricked up her ears, but deigned no further notice. Another blow: The cow stood slowly up, looked from side to side, but seeing no intruder, remained quiet. Another rose, then another, and another, and the calves, innocent-looking creatures, that might be mistaken for tall lambs; then a deer that was grazing near trotted off, and the herd began slowly to walk away, Last of all, the pair of large horns were lifted from the ground, and the steer that bore them showed himself, with all the girth and gravity of a patriarch. They walked so slowly that I had full time to note their appearance—the small head, the swell at the back of the neck, the clean limbs, the easy movement, and the graceful beauty that belong to kine, struck me perhaps more forcibly than ever before. No wonder that when a couple of Lincolnshire graziers came to see the herd, one turned to the other, and said, "Why, Tom, we have been breeding and breeding for years and years to get shape, and here 'twas all the while ready to our hands."

Had we alarmed the beasts suddenly, or had we approached on the other side, where they could have scented us on the wind, their wild instincts would have been exhibited in rapid flight. They are alike shy of

keepers and strangers in summer, when feed is abundant; but in winter they haunt the lower pastures, and condescend to eat the hay flung out for them every morning by one of the keepers. They wait, however, till he has gone away before they begin. They tolerate no interference; and if one should fall sick, or become disabled in any way, no attempt is made to carry aid; it would be dangerous. In some instances the herd have been known to give a finishing stroke to their incapables. When danger is apprehended, the bulls march in the van, and in retreat they bring up the rear.

When unusually alarmed, the cattle seek the shelter of a thicket, known as Robin Hood's bog, and there the calves are hidden for a week or ten days after birth. At times, however, the little creatures stray from the lair, and get into trouble. A kind-hearted villager, finding one entangled in a bog, sought to extricate it; but calfkin, though not yet sixty hours old, began to butt and bellow so vigorously as to alarm the herd, and the man had to take to his heels. Mr. Hardy once found a two-day calf fast in a rut, and lifted it out; but no sooner was the little stranger befriended, than it also began to butt and bellow. The herd were grazing at some distance; a cow lifted up her head and listened, and presently hurried to the rescue, and on her approach the steward mounted his pony and trotted away. When the cow came up she condoled noisily with the calf after her manner, drew off with it into the thicket, and remained concealed for the rest of the day.

In a communication which was read at the meeting of the British Association at Newcastle, the Earl of Tankerville relates an instance of tenacity of life

among the cattle, which I take leave to quote: "An old bull being to be killed, one of the keepers had proceeded to separate him from the rest of the herd, which were feeding in the outer park. This the bull resenting, he at last made a rush at the keeper, and got him down; he then tossed him three several times, and afterwards knelt down upon him and broke several of his ribs. There being no other person present but a boy, the only assistance that could be given was by letting loose a deer-hound belonging to Lord Ossulston, which immediately attacked the bull, and by biting his heels, drew him off the man and eventually saved his life. The bull, however, never left the keeper, but kept continually watching and returning to him, giving him a toss from time to time. In this state of things, and while the dog, with singular sagacity and courage, was holding the bull at bay, a messenger came up to the castle, when all the gentlemen came out with their rifles, and commenced a fire upon the bull, principally by a steady good marksman from behind a fence at a distance of twenty-five yards; but it was not till six or seven balls had actually entered the head of the animal (one of them at the eye) that he at last fell. During the whole time he never flinched nor changed his ground; merely shaking his head as he received the several shots."

Bewick says that in former days all the marksmen in the neighbourhood took part in the killing; but now the keeper alone, having selected his animal, administers the fatal bullet. The carcass weighs from five hundred to six hundred pounds; the flesh is dark in colour, but tender and juicy, and with somewhat of the flavour of game. The present number of the herd is about sixty.

Mr. Hardy gave a finishing touch to his kindness, by letting me out at a private door in the park wall on the side nearest to Belford. It was a sudden change from the trees and grassy slopes to the brow of a hill densely covered with fern, ling, and brambles, where your track must be the easiest-looking gaps. However, I trudged away, came to a rugged descent, at the foot of which I struck a sandy track near a lone cottage, where I was set upon by three dogs that would not be persuaded of my wish to be let alone, till I convinced one by a big stone, that made him howl bitterly at the weight of my argument.

Then up a broad field slope, which looks as if it had not long been used to cultivation, leading to a surprise —a wide black waste, crossed by a road which looks the whiter by contrast—a most melancholy scene. I knew that the sea lay on the right, and turned away in that direction, and came at length in sight of Warenton, a farm-place. But even here I could not sympathise with a Northumbrian farmstead; the ugly ranges of building, the chimney poking up as if it would like to be taller, the altogether unpicturesque appearance at a distance, and the untidiness of the nearer view, always gave me a sinking of the heart. I tried to reason with myself about good farming, employment to industrious hinds, and the like; but I could in no wise admire the Northumbrian farmstead, and thought the landscape would look better without it. How different from the farms that gladden the wayfarer's eye in Essex or Berkshire!

Beyond Warenton the scenery improves; a pleasant field-path leads into what a fond topographer calls the "lovely basin of Belford;" rich masses of wood and acres of grain, across which your eye roves to rest on

the sea in the distance. I had a compensation for the walk across the black waste in a sunset of wondrous splendour: beneath leaden clouds rose an arch that seemed to be the portal of Infinity, shining with a glory that transformed the common earth into fairy-land, and held me in contemplation till sober twilight prevailed.

CHAPTER XVI.

Belford—A Watch for Dominie—Embleton—Salmon-trout—Travelling Travellers—Isabella and Epitaph—Boat-stables—Dunstanborough—A Large Ruin—Grim Cliffs—Diamonds—Sir Guy the Seeker—The Catastrophe—Rumble Churn—Rioting, Raging, Roaring—A Twofold Bath—Lilburne Tower—Basaltic Columns—A Storm—Herring Boats—A Tipsy Tailor—Newton—Abominations—Rock-mushrooms—Beadnel—Geologists and Antiquaries—Dismal Fog—North Sunderland—Limekilns—Lifeboat—Maritime Jewelry—Monkshouse—Landlord and Fisherman—More Caution—Bamborough—The Ten-minute Gun—King Ida's Castle—Taken and Retaken—A Charitable Bishop—Ready with Food, Schooling, and Rescue—Hearing and not Seeing—Robin on French Poachers—Lifeboats—Fewer Wrecks and more Fish—Lasting Fog—Bamborough again—Hospitable Hostess—Lucker—Berwick.

BELFORD is one of those small market-towns which has had to exchange the daily sight of stage-coaches and the Royal Mail for a couple of omnibuses and a railway station a good mile away; and finds it possible to live with the new order of things, without forgetting one at least of the primitive virtues. For during my evening at the *Black Swan*, I heard a committee of four discussing how best to lay out ten pounds on a watch which was to be a farewell gift to a worthy schoolmaster about to sail for Australia.

By the first train the next morning I journeyed a few miles south to Christon Bank station, walked thence across fields to Embleton, a quiet village, with a good specimen of a village inn, the *Hare and Hounds*. Its claim to honourable mention was strengthened by

the excellent salmon-trout which the hostess set before me for breakfast. Nightingales' tongues may be pretty eating; but if one of the centurions had happened to cast a net into the Aln in the month of July, the Berwick smacks would have been anticipated some centuries by swift galleys conveying fish of Bernician rivers to the imperial table at Rome; and Apion would have had another rare dish to write about. What comfortable fast-days those monks of Hulne must have had!

Embleton, too, feels the influence of the railway. In former days, said the hostess, if a traveller came in the afternoon, he stayed all night: now he hastens away "to save the last train," leaving the *Hare and Hounds* to mourn their empty beds. 'Tis the same story everywhere; that last train is always helping the travellers to "get on," so that whether they ever stop anywhere to sleep seems doubtful.

Happy is the parish which keeps its church in repair as here at Embleton; the vicarage, with its embrasures and solid weatherbeaten walls, looks as if it had once been a fortress. The tombstones and inscriptions are mostly in full mourning, both alike black, whereby much of the effect of epitaphs is lost. Isabella seems to be as frequent and a favourite name in Northumberland as Rebecca is in Yorkshire. On one of the stones here you may read:—

> Weep not for me my husband dear
> But keep in mind that I lie here
> And be mindful of the three
> Motherless children I left with thee
> In heaven I hope the fourth will meet
> Where all our joys will be complete.

The villagers get double duty out of their boats, cutting them in two when they will no longer swim,

and setting them keel uppermost on a dwarf wall, and so contriving a stable: wherein they exhibit thriftiness and ingenuity.

From the top of the bank at the end of the village Dunstanborough Castle is full in view. Half-an-hour of lane and field, past one or two of those heart-breaking "farm-places," and the birthplace of Duns Scotus, will bring us thither.

The ruin stands on a basaltic peninsula which, black and stern, advances upon the sea, and forms the most picturesque mass of Northumbrian cliffs. It is one of those ruins about which you may wander at pleasure, and approach on any side you please. Scramble up the bank, and you will be surprised by the large extent of ground within the walls—nine acres, on which, according to Camden, former occupants reaped two hundred bushels of corn, besides hay.

The great arched entrance between two round towers remains, but blocked up; and the lowermost chambers and vaults are used as stables or cattle lairs; and there are other towers on the edge of the cliff, much dilapidated, and though you see, as usual, bits of arches, of old fireplaces, stairs, and recesses, fringed here and there with drooping weeds, there is nothing picturesque in the ruin as a whole: Lilburne Tower, seen from the shore beyond the peninsula, is worth all the rest. But Nature lends her aid, and impresses you with the sight of the grim cliffs, adorned here and there with clusters of thrift; and of the sea swirling and foaming among the rocks and in the deep-worn crevices, while on each side the beach is strewn with great black stones in amazing number. Crystals are sometimes found among them known as Dunstanborough diamonds.

While wandering hither and thither, making out the remains of the chapel, or the well, or the sallyport, we may remember what the antiquaries tell us, that this castle was built by the same masons who wrought at Warkworth, in the reign of Edward II., upon the site of a fortress which had belonged to Edmund, Earl of Lancaster. The Earl of Tankerville is the present owner. Or if we incline to mingle romance with history, there is the legend of Sir Guy the Seeker, who while sheltering here from a storm, was accosted by a "ghastly wight."

"Sir Knight! Sir Knight! if your heart be right,
And your nerves be firm and true,
Sir Knight! Sir Knight! a Beauty bright
In durance waits for you.

'That mortal ne'er drew vital air,
Who witness'd fear in me:
Come what come will, come good, come ill,
Lead on! I'll follow thee!'

And now they go both high and low,
Above and under-ground,
And in and out, and about and about,
And round, and round, and round."

Then there is a winding stair, and at the top a brazen gate, of which the bolt was a venomous snake; but the creature yields to the ghastly wight, and the two enter a sable hall wherein—

"Of marble black as the raven's back
A hundred steeds stood round;
And of marble white by each a knight
Lay sleeping on the ground;"

and there within a crystal tomb is the captive lady, at sight of whom Sir Guy declares himself ready to undertake anything for her deliverance.

It is the old story of the sword and the horn; the

knight makes the same mistake as all others had before him and since; and when he recovers from his swoon at daybreak, he begins to search for the winding stair.—

"But still he seeks, and aye he seeks,
And seeks, and seeks in vain;
And still he repeats to all he meets,
'Could I find that sword *again!*'

Which words he follows with a groan,
As if his heart would break;
And, oh! that groan has so strange a tone
It makes all hearers quake!

The villagers round know well its sound,
And when they hear it pour'd,
'Hark! hark;' they cry; 'the Seeker Guy
Groans for the Wizard's sword.'"

A deep gully, known as Rumble Churn, which penetrates the eastern cliff, was long supposed to be the scene of all the supernatural grumblings of the Dunstanborough demons. The chasm bends as it enters, so that standing at the inner end you cannot see its mouth, yawning upon the sea; and below, it is choked with the big black stones, and when winds are piping loud, then the waves dash in, and the demons of the storm roll the stones up and down in mad glee. Even as Sir Guy heard it, so may you.

"With strange turmoil did it bubble and boil,
And echo from place to place;
So strong was its dash, and so high did it splash,
That it wash'd the castle's base:

The spray as it broke appear'd like smoke
From a sea volcano pouring;
And still did it rumble, and grumble, and bumble,
Rioting, raging, roaring."

Even in calm weather the water gurgles and moans fitfully as it sinks and swells in the gloomy Churn; I

watched and listened for a while, and seeing that the gully was snugly sheltered, I, notwithstanding demons and big stones, went down into it to bathe. 'Twas truly refreshing to sit on a hump of weeds, and feel the play of the clear green water; but not so refreshing to have to dress in a heavy shower which began to fall as I scrambled out.

Anon the sun peeped forth, but doubtfully. It was not for nothing those leaden clouds arched in the sunset last night. My twofold bath animated me with a desire to walk; so I went and took a parting survey of Lilburne Tower, which, standing at one of the angles, defended as it were by great columns of basalt that shoot through the green turf of the outward slope around its base, is the most striking object of the whole ruin. Time and the weather have cracked it sadly; but strengthened by iron bars it promises to stand yet for many a year, to charm the wanderer and attract the artist.

From Warkworth where we left the coast, three days ago, to Dunstanborough the distance is about twelve miles, within which the Aln flows into the sea, and the park and woods of Howick—the seat of the Greys—salute the eastern sun; and the view down to Bulmer Point, about half way, enables us to picture those four leagues of coast to our mind.

How gloomy appeared the peninsula with its crest of ruin each time that I looked back thereon! and I had not gone two miles when a roaring thunderstorm made up for the calmness of Rumble Churn. The weather did not recover from the shock, but remained overcast. Happy is the wayfarer who at such a time can draw on a store of cheerful thoughts. A little farther, and I saw the fishermen of Newton in the distance, busy with

their herring boats, and boys going to and fro for big stones to use as ballast. The boats had just been hauled down from their berths behind the sand-hills; and I was in time to see the last emerge from the gap, drawn by four powerful horses. A tall man would put himself in the way and gesticulate, despite the shoves and remonstrances of the blue jackets; one of whom told me that the tall fellow was a tailor of Embleton, and owner of the boat, who made it a rule to get drunk on hauling-down day, and had not failed on the present occasion. Blue-jacket inclined to be sociable, and wished that he could tramp along the beach with me as far as Berwick, or Baw-ick, as he pronounced it with his Northumbrian burr.

Newton is not pretty or pleasing: it boasts a coast-guard station, and exhibits itself to the sea as a village of pantiled cottages and stables, along three sides of a square, where only the public-house has an upper story. A shabby shed occupies part of the open space, and all round it the women fling their household slops and fish offal; and having created an abomination, are content to live within sight thereof. The powerful teams were baiting in the stables; and a dinner was cooking for the teamsters, at the public-house. Over all the hubbub in the taproom rose the noisy tailor's voice. I hope some one told him next day what a precious fool he had made of himself.

Beyond Newton the sandy beach gives place to rock, a great level floor curiously honey-combed. It is as if the surface were covered with innumerable petrified mushrooms; and at first you tread carefully, fancying they will break off; but they are firmly rooted, and will not even be kicked off. The farther from the sea the greater are the interstices: hence the mushrooms

become smaller as you get towards low-water mark. The rock is remarkable besides for scattered pools, some of which lined with a pearl-like substance are exquisitely beautiful.

Next Beadnel, or Beadlen, as the fishermen call it, appears in sight at the extremity of a sandy bay. Coming to the Point, we find reefs and beds of sandstone sloping up from the beach, and presenting a bluff front to the quarter whence falls the heaviest shock of waves. Geologists, scanning the sandstone, tell us they find proof of fourteen different upheavals of the surface, and fossil remains identical with those which may be seen in a quarry on Haltwhistle Common. And on the Point antiquaries discover the obscure remains of an ancient chapel, built by one of those three princesses of Northumberland, who preferred piety before courtly life.

"St. Abb, St. Helen, and St. Bey,
They a' built kirks whilk to be nearest to the sea.
St. Abb's upon the nabs,
St. Helen's on the lea;
St. Bey's upon Dunbar sands
Stands nearest to the sea."

Here are more of the amphibious edifices, half boat and half hovel, receptacles for yarns and lines; and fishing-gear and lobster-pots lie about in heaps; and the big caldron, fixed with a stumpy chimney, shows where the tar is heated. One of the men tells me that the village owns nineteen boats, and has subscribed to buy a barometer.

Beadnel lies within the Point, sheltered by a clumpish belt of trees, in a tame and naked landscape. It looked dreary, for a drizzly fog crept over sea and shore, narrowing the prospect, and making everything

damp and chilly. I left the beach for the road along the links, where acres of ragwort and rest-harrow form a variegated level. Then we came to a huge gap, a limestone quarry, running in half a mile or more from the sea; and men hewing and blasting, and loading wagons; and trains hauled up tramways by a rope from the engine-house above, and there sent speeding down a long incline to the kilns by the port. A few yards farther bring us to North Sunderland, a small, common-looking town, squalid in places, with shops that are also living-rooms and bed-rooms, and a general appearance of not caring very much for the fitness of things. Signs of trade are, however, manifest: two stone piers, all wasted and water-worn, with wide gaping joints from the shock of the sea, form a small harbour, into which vessels of three hundred tons may enter. Lime is the principal article of trade; and the kilns are built close to the harbour for convenience of loading, and for the inconvenience of the town, which gets well smothered with the smoke whenever the wind blows from the sea.

There are six life-boat stations from Berwick to Tynemouth, and this is one of them; up the slope behind the kilns you see the boat-house, and standing by it the broad-wheeled carriage on which the boat is drawn along the beach when required for aid or rescue.

Here, too, the fishermen were busy with preparations for the herring fishery; the port was crowded with boats among the ships, and groups of boys sat looking on; or, improving on Simple Simon's example, held one end of a string, of which the other hung under the water. Chinese kiteflyers could hardly look more gravely happy than they.

North Sunderland is commonly the place of embarkation for the Farne Islands; and for ten shillings you will find boats enough ready to take you thither. Considering the state of the weather, I made no arrangements for a trip; but set off to go farther along the coast, hoping the morrow would bring sunshine. But the fog fell always thicker: those numerous specimens of "maritime jewelry," as Thackeray would call the Islands, an interesting sight in fine weather, are now hidden, save that at times the nearest and largest looms through the mist like a low dark cloud. So, as nothing better could be done, I admired the countless beads that clustered or hung on weeds and walls, as if there you saw folds of the veil, beneath which the landscape wept the absence of the sun; that gathered on my hair and eyebrows till they were heavy with pearls as a Naiad's tresses, and I had only to shake my head to scatter the little beads in fairy-like profusion. And all the while I could hear the sea plunging at the base of the sandhills which, magnified by the fog, rose mysteriously along the edge of the links.

By and by *St. Cuthbert's Inn*, or Monkshouse as it is commonly called, appeared by the wayside: and there sat the host, a jolly old fisherman, painting his floats under a shed, surrounded by nets and buoys and all kinds of tackle. I had heard that Monkshouse was the best starting-place for the Islands, and stayed to have a talk with the industrious proprietor. It might clear off before the morrow; if the wind would only get up, there would be no doubt about it. He'd be glad to take me out in his boat; but having to catch herrings, would find me a safe man, if he could not spare time himself. He had had the honour of

taking out the Duke and Duchess not long ago: it was blowing half a gale of wind at the time, but they would go, and got dripping wet with spray; yet the Duchess was not at all afraid. "A nice lady she is, sir, as ever stepped."

Could I stay all night? Oh, yes—there was plenty of room: no visitors in the house, except an artist with his wife and little boy from Newcastle. But we reckoned without our hostess, who, I thought, must have been born in Allendale, so perseveringly did she argue that there was no room—that I couldn't stay there—that the master didn't know: how should he?

"I tell ye he was with Mr. Hardy yesterday," retorted the master.

"Hey! if he's a friend of Mr. Hardy's that makes a difference," rejoined the mistress, and she withdrew her denial. Seeing that the wing added to the house is twice as large as the original body, 'tis my belief that if twenty canny Northumbrians had come, there would have been room enough for them and to spare.

It would be possible I thought to see a castle in a fog; so to avoid delay for the morrow, I employed the evening hours in a walk to Bamborough, about two miles farther along the coast. The sandhills increase in elevation here, but could not be seen, for the fog was denser than ever. Every ten minutes I heard the dull heavy boom of the gun fired to warn ships in the offing; but not till I was close under its lofty walls could I see King Ida's fortress. So small was the portion dimly revealed at once, so much remained hidden, that imagination had free scope in picturing the ancient stronghold. You cross a deep moat cut in the sandstone rock: towers defend the gateway; the road within is fenced by a cliff, and ascends round a

deep curve; but you may mount to the court above by a steep stair. Here are offices and residences, and embrasured walls broad enough for three or four men to walk abreast; but the thing chiefly to be looked at is the great square keep that stands in sullen massiveness between the inner and outer wards. You step into a gloomy hall into which light enters only by the door or through loopholes in walls twelve feet thick. The prison-like appearance is strengthened by huge chains hanging on the wall; but the housekeeper tells you they are for use in shipwrecks. She shows you the board-room; makes you aware that the loopholes have been enlarged into windows; that a stair has been cut within the thickness of the wall, and leads you to the library and dining-room; and then, if you ask, to the well which is in a vault opening from the hall. It is sunk through the rock to a depth of 150 feet; and lighted candles on a wooden cross are let down to show you the water gleaming at the bottom. The castle is now supplied with water from a distant source.

And this is—

"King Ida's castle, huge and square,"

which we read about in *Marmion*. The Flame-bearer's name carries us back 1300 years; and to his stronghold and city of Bebbanburgh. Penda, that ferocious king of Mercia, laid siege to it in 642, but was discomfited, as much say the chroniclers by the prayers of Aidan the good Bishop of Lindisfarne, as by the valour of the garrison. But neither valour nor prayers kept out the Dane, who took the place twice and burnt it. Again was it rebuilt, and Robert de Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, when he revolted from William Rufus, made it his head quarters. To

hold the castle in check and punish the treason, William built near it a castle, Malvoisin—ugly neighbour. David of Scotland tried to take it, but failed, when on his way to be beaten at the Battle of the Standard. Edward III. left his queen Philippa within the walls of Bamborough while he went to conquer Scotland; and all through the Wars of the Roses the fortress shared the fate of the contending parties. In Elizabeth's reign, Sir John Forster was appointed Governor and Warden of the Marches, and by Forsters was it held till one of the family was unlucky enough to lose his head for helping the Jacobite rising in 1715. The manor and castle were then purchased by Lord Crewe, Bishop of Durham, who at his decease bequeathed the whole for charitable purposes. Under the management of trustees, but chiefly through the active benevolence of Archdeacon Sharp, praiseworthy measures were set on foot, which are still maintained; whereby a school, a dispensary, a store for the sale of grain and groceries at a low price to the poor, and a system for the prevention and relief of shipwreck were established. The firing of the ten-minute gun is part of this system; a coast-patrol is another; a watch on the top of the keep in clear weather is another. No sooner is a vessel known to be in distress, than the safety-apparatus is sent off, the life-boat puts out from North Sunderland, and preparations are made within the castle for the comfort of rescued mariners.

It seemed strange to look down from the walls upon nothing but dense gray mist; to hear the roar and rush of the breakers immediately beneath, and yet to be unable to see their foaming crests. The beach was utterly invisible.

Mine host, honest Robin, was still at work when I

got back to Monkshouse. He's no good fisherman who refuses to work double tides when the herrings are coming; such is the sentiment. I told him what I had seen at Newton; and he laughed merrily at the "daft tailor," whom he knew very well, and described him as a "sammentraw lad,"—that is, tall and slender. He had once lived at Newton himself, but left because it was such a dirty place. He confirmed what the old fisherman had told me at Staithes in the former year, about the doings of French poachers on the fishing-grounds. "'Tis quite true; but 'tis hard to say which is the worst, French or Flemish." Then he explained that in consequence of the many disputes, every British fisherman was now required to mark all his floats with the initials of a given port, and the number of his licence. Thus Bk, 37, at once identifies Berwick as the port, and the number the individual. Farther south it would be S for Shields, and farther north L for Leith, and so all round the coast.

Science, which in these days has become shrewd and inquisitive, was hardly likely to forget the thousands of hardy fishermen who inhabit our shores; and now if they choose to know what is the form of fishing-boat best adapted for speed and safety, the knowledge is ready for them, and shows, moreover, how fishing-boats and coast-guard boats may do duty in time of need as life-boats by an easily manageable addition to their fittings. With air-casks and chambers to give buoyancy, and a sliding keel, the danger of capsizing may be avoided. With the keel down there is little risk of upset in crossing a furious bar, and with it raised a boat may safely take the ground in shallow water. The drowning of twenty pilots in 1849, by the overturning of the Tyne life-boat was a melancholy demonstration

of the necessity for improvement. If the life-boat could not be trusted, what could? The Duke of Northumberland offered a prize of one hundred guineas for the best model of a safe boat; and, as if to show that many brave hearts were still ready to do battle with the elements, two hundred and eighty models were sent to the Admiralty, there to be judged of and decided on by competent officers. The result was the building of a life-boat, combining all the excellences, by Mr. Peake. The Duke circulated some hundreds of copies of the official report, and has in other ways shown how truly he is interested in the importaut subject.

Not less important to fishermen, is the question of weather; and science is now able to show to them that the rough and ready experience on which they have so long relied, is essentially improvable by precise observation. The Meteorological Societies, which have for some years been at work in England and Scotland, have made known certain phenomena of the weather, which, once understood, may subserve preservation of life and the interests of trade. The times and seasons when storms are most frequent will be made out; and as nature operates with periodicity, the "storm periods" will be eliminated. Let it be clearly known that our winter storms come mostly from the south-west or north-east, and the seaman or fisherman on the coast will be prepared to steer the course that will take him soonest out of the influence of the storm. Let it be known that a fall in the barometer fortells a gale, let every fishing-village be furnished with a proper barometer, and let one man be instructed in its management, and the warnings of the instrument will not pass unheeded.

And the temperature of the air should be observed, as well as the pressure, and the fisherman must learn to read the thermometer as well as the barometer. It will tell him beforehand what the day will bring forth; for it is now a well-ascertained fact, that a difference of a few degrees of temperature makes a considerable difference in the take of fish. In the herring fishery it is especially important and observable. Mr. Glaisher says, "The best catches are when the temperature is between fifty-four and fifty-seven degrees. At temperatures below fifty, the proportion of catch to miscatch is almost equal; between fifty and sixty degrees the proportion is about four catches to one miscatch."

Hence, it seems clear that distressing accidents may be avoided and industry promoted by meteorological observations, and the sooner the observers are set to work the better. I had been told that a beginning was made, but in all my walk along the Northumbrian coast, could not hear anywhere of a fisherman's barometer. The nearest approach was the intention of the Beadnel men to subscribe and buy one.

There was no sound of fine weather in the roll of the breakers upon the beach when I awoke the next morning, nor any sign of it at breakfast time. "If the wind would only get up," said honest Robin, while going about assiduous among his floats and nets. But the wind did not get up. Once there was a slight lift to seaward, and a gleamy brightness shone through the fog; but presently all settled down again and darker than before. I waited till near noon, and then took up my knapsack and walked to Bamborough. The hostess of my *Lord Crewe's Arms* was just sitting down to dinner with her maids, and there was such a relishing

smell of good cookery, that I asked to join, and was made "heartily welcome."

Northumberland is no exception to the rule, that the world is full of compensations. Not one penny would the hostess take for my dinner. I might pay her for the ale, but, as regards the rest, had she not bidden me welcome? Well, I would not argue the point sorely with so good-humoured a lady, who keeps her house so admirably clean, and has besides a reading-room, where you may see *The Times* and other papers, and take your pleasure in a good selection of books.

The weather would not put off its sullenness; rain began to fall. I thought I would go to Berwick by way of change, and walked through the rain to Lucker station, fancying myself in unhappy plight till I saw a man and girl who had driven over in an open cart. They looked wretched. And very wretched did Tweedmouth and Berwick look, as the train rolled across the lofty bridge amid a smoky fog that reminded me of a London November.

A week's residence, some years ago, had made me pretty familiar with Berwick; so I had only to walk about and refresh my memory. Anxious on the question of weather, I walked down to the pier, but saw nothing cheerful. The salmon-fishers rowing in their boats from Spittal Snook, looked strange and spectral through the mist; and if Tweed had anything to say concerning his birthplace in the western hills, and his travel along the Border land, it was stifled by the gloom, and I heard it not.

CHAPTER XVII.

Hawings for Breakfast—A Walk round the Walls—The Two Bridges—A Scotchman's Reason Why—Berwick Bounds—Historic Associations—Kings, Queens, and Butchers—Countess of Buchan and Grizel Cochrane—Johnny Cope—Proxy Church-bells—A Dry Preacher—The Pier—The Snook—Bamborough again—A Pleasant Village—Grace Darling's Tomb—The Broken Column: a Catastrophe—Church and Crypt—The Wandering Shepherdess—The Laidley Worm of Spindleston Heugh.

"You'd like some hawings?" said the waiter at the *Red Lion*, with the complacency inspired by a conviction that the first-fruits of the herring season could by no means be refused for breakfast. I had not risen early, but was up, nevertheless, before the wind, and so had no need to hurry over the dainty dish which, a little earlier, had been swimming in the sea. Once in Holland the twentieth portion of a July herring was handed to me as a special treat; but Berwick gives two whole ones, and would not begrudge more.

We will not be lazy though the wind is, and will go forth to meet whatever inspirations may come to us through the drizzle. We can walk all round the town on the walls which have been standing ever since the days of Queen Elizabeth, and enjoy a varied and pleasing view; that is, in fine weather. You can look up the vale, or down to the river's mouth, where spreads the sandy flat on which the fishermen of Spittal dry their nets, and their village on the edge of the beach — a village with a mineral spring and

lodgings for bathers. You can see Tweedmouth on the English side of the river; and the old bridge of fifteen arches, which was twenty-four years a-building; the new bridge—the Royal Border Bridge—across which the railway runs from kingdom to kingdom, two thousand feet long, and one hundred and twenty high, was built in three years. To see a train approach from the south along the lofty embankment, as it were on a hill-top, to the range of twenty-eight tall arches is a striking spectacle.

For many a year did "our town of Berwick-upon-Tweed" claim to be mentioned by itself in all royal proclamations, as it were a little state, independent of the mighty states on either side. A Scottish schoolmaster, with whom I once foregathered on the banks of the Tyne, told me how it happened that the ancient burgh belonged neither to England nor Scotland, and his explanation was this: During the Temptation, while the Evil One was showing to the Holy One all the kingdoms of the earth, he kept Berwick hidden beneath his thumb, wishing to reserve it as his own little nook.

Tradition apart, we shall do well to keep in mind that "Berwick Bounds" comprehend a territory of about eight square miles, all on the north side of the Tweed, and with a frontage of three miles towards the sea. The rulers over this territory, and the administrators of its ten thousand pounds of annual revenue, are the corporation of Berwick. Sloping up from the river, crowning a high precipitous bank, where the railway-station occupies the site of a castle, the town is one full of interest to a stranger. The walk round the walls on a fine day from gate to gate, and from bastion to bastion, presents a fine and varied prospect to

the eye, wherein the mind finds multiplied associations. We are reminded that William the Lion was made to give Berwick to the English, to ransom himself from that royal captivity into which he fell at Alnwick. Lion-hearted Richard, when providing ways and means for his crusades, gave it back to the Scots for ten thousand marks. Fox-hearted John took it by storm in 1216, with execrable cruelties; but the Scots rebuilt the town, and during the reign of Alexander III. it became the wealthiest port in all the realm. Again siege and storm in 1296, by Edward I., and seventeen thousand souls butchered without mercy, so that as the old chroniclers say, the very mills were set a-going by the streams of blood. Then siege and storm, capture and re-capture, burning of ships, hanging of hostages through succeeding reigns, recalling the names of Bruce and Baliol, of the three Edwards, of Wallace the deliverer. Yonder, on the road to Dunbar, rises Halidown Hill, where the Third Edward defeated the Scots under Archibald Douglas, with direful slaughter. How various are the personages herewith associated! The Countess of Buchan, shut up for six years in a wooden cage, for her share in the coronation of Bruce; Grizel Cochrane, robbing the mail, on the moor beyond Tweedmouth, to get possession of her father's death-warrant; Princess Johanna, daughter of Edward II., hailed as Makepeace by the people, coming down to marry Prince David; Princess Margaret escorted hither to espouse James IV.; Queen Mary coming to view the town; James VI. passing through on his way to mount the throne of England; and the gate which looks northwards will remind us of Johnny Cope, hurrying in with the news of his own defeat.

While sauntering round, you will remark that the

town has more of the English than the Scottish look; but you see no church towers. The good folk, however, that their town might not be without a spire, set up a tall one on their town-hall: it meets your eye from all sides, and below it hangs a peal of eight bells, the chimes of which suffice on Sunday for all the churches.

Dr. Henry, a by no means cheerful preacher, used to preach in that dull-looking High Meeting-House, which you may see in a back street. One rainy Sunday he got wet on his way to chapel, and having a dread of damp clothes, requested a reverend brother, Dr. Macknight, to officiate for him. "Gang awa' up to the pulpit, man," answered the Doctor, "ye'll be dry enough there."

The pier at the mouth of the river is a fine breezy promenade, nearly half a mile in length, for those who love sea air. As I walked thither from the wall, I saw the coast-guard firing a thirty-six pounder at a target set up on Spittal Snook, for the fog had thinned off, and the opposite shore of the stream could be seen. The Snook projects so far forwards, that the channel between it and the pier is not more than thirty feet wide.

At noon I went back by rail to Lucker; and while walking thence to Bamborough, had the pleasure to hear that at last the wind began to get up. The rain ceased, the leaves rustled, Spindleston Heugh could be seen, Bamborough Castle was no longer invisible from the village, and now and then the sun peeped forth with promise of fair weather.

Bamborough is a clean and cheerful village: it has a green surrounded by trees; the noise of rooks is heard about the place; and the cottagers train flowers around

their windows; the roads and paths are well kept; and everything looks respectable enough for a model village. One might sojourn here agreeably for a few weeks in summer; there are scenes worth exploring in the neighbourhood; the beach is broad, smooth, and sandy; the castle-hill and terraces are always accessible; but there are no boats: for those you must go to Monkshouse or Sunderland.

Church and churchyard exhibit the same signs of care. Among the gravestones you will see one that marks the resting-place of GRACE DARLING, some distance from the canopied tomb erected to her memory in 1846. On this she is represented as lying at full length, her hands crossed, with an oar by her side, held by the right arm, suggestive of the heroic exploit which made her—a lighthouse-keeper's daughter—famous throughout the land. It was right to place the tomb on that part of the gentle slope where it is within sight of the sea. A few yards from it a broken column commemorates the fate of the Rev. G. Morell Mackenzie, who, when the *Pegasus* struck on the Goldstone, in July, 1843, gathered the passengers around him on the deck, and prayed aloud with unfaltering voice while the vessel slowly sank, and the waves leaped higher and higher around their victims, till the last drowning cry was stifled.

In the church you may see a specimen of Chantrey's handiwork—a cloaked female figure; a relative of the Archdeacon to whose benevolence Bamborough is so much indebted. His tomb is close by, inscribed with his merits. The window at the west end displays the capabilities of Birmingham in the art of staining glass; and we must wait five hundred years before we condemn the crimsons and purples as thin and cold. We are

too apt to forget how much the old stainers have been helped by Time. There is a new font, too, brought from York five years ago: the old one is removed to the chapel at Beadnel. But most of all, your eye will rest with pleasure on the proportions of the building; the three arches springing from one great pillar; the grand transept arches; the side aisle of twofold breadth. Then, from the outside you may descend into the crypt, a stony place with low groined ceiling, that seems to oppress you by its weight, especially in the inner dungeon-like recess. Three narrow lights enable you to see an old sundial, and fragments of tombs, a broken cross, and some other relics that lie on the floor.

At sunset I could dimly see the Farnes and Holy Island from the Castle; presently, a light piercing the haze from far to seaward revealed the site of the Longstone Lighthouse—the home of the Darlings. Later, I heard an old man, who sat among the guests in the inn kitchen, talk about the Wandering Shepherdess, who used in former days, when the castle was neglected and ruinous, to tend a few sheep on the hill, and who, as his grandmother remembered hearing people say, was a lady of rank and fortune, who had been crossed in love.

I spoke about that ancient tradition of which Bamborough was the scene, and had the pleasure of hearing that the Laidley Worm of Spindleston Heugh was still remembered in the fireside talk of the village. All present knew the legend; and had been on the heugh, or crag, as they indifferently called it. 'Twas a nice place to go to; because the rocks made it look pretty, and there was a nice view from it. Bamborough Castle looked uncommonly well from

Spindleston. And one had seen the Worm's trough; another, the gully down which the loathsome creature crept; another, the rock on the top of the hill, round which it used to coil. But the place was altered now; and by the opening of a stone quarry, the Worm's haunt had been destroyed.

A very curious legend is that of the Laidley Worm, one with which we may finish our evening. The King, we are told, goes forth from Bamborough Castle. The Princess mourns—watches for his return, tripping in and out of the yard with the keys knotted on a string over her shoulder—the King returns, but with a new Queen, a stepmother; and she, hearing one of her lords praise the Princess's beauty, vows to bring her down to a low degree.

"I will liken her to a Laidley Worm,
That warps about the stone,
And not till Childy Wynd comes back,
Shall she again be won.

The Princess stood at her bower door,
Laughing; who could her blame?
But ere the next day's sun went down
A long worm she became.

For seven miles east, and seven miles west,
And seven miles north and south,
No blade of grass or corn could grow,
So venomous was her mouth.

The milk of seven stately cows—
(It was costly her to keep)
Was brought her daily, which she drank
Before she went to sleep.

At this day may be seen the cave
Which held her folded up,
And the stone trough, the very same,
Out of which she did sup.

Word went east, and word went west,
And word is gone over the sea,
That a Laidley Worm in Spindleston Heugh
Would ruin the North Countrie.

Word went east, and word went west,
And over the sea did go;
The Childy Wynd got wit of it,
Which fill'd his heart with woe."

He calls his merry men about him, tells them his forebodings concerning his only sister Margaret—they build a ship with masts of the rowan-tree, and set sail, and favoured by the wind soon see the banks of Bamborough-shire—the Queen sees the ship, and sends forth her witchwives every one to sink it—but—

"Their spells were vain: the hags return'd
To the Queen in sorrowful mood,
Crying that witches have no power
Where there is rowan-tree wood."

A boat manned by armed men is sent, and with no better success—meanwhile the Worm is in great excitement, leaping up and down, until Childy Wynd, jumping into the shallow sea, gets safe to land:—

"And now he drew his berry-brown sword;
And laid it on her head;
And swore if she did harm to him,
That he would strike her dead.

'Oh! quit thy sword, and bend thy bow,
And give me kisses three;
For though I am a poisonous worm,
No hurt will I do to thee.

Oh! quit thy sword, and bend thy bow,
And give me kisses three;
If I'm not won ere the sun go down,
Won I shall never be.'

He sheathed his sword, and bent his bow,
And gave her kisses three;—
She crept into the cave a worm,
But stepped out a ladie.

No clothing had this lady fine
To keep her from the cold;
He took his mantle from him about,
And round her did it fold."

Then, away to the castle as fast as they can win —the King rejoices—the Queen, pale and sore afraid, knows that her power must yield to Childy Wynd, who speaks—

"'Woe be to thee, thou wicked witch,
An ill death may'st thou dee;
As thou my sister hast likened,
So liken'd shalt thou be.

I will turn thee into a toad,
That on the ground doth wend;
And won, won thou shalt never be,
Till this world hath an end.'

Now on the sand, near Ida's tower,
She crawls a loathsome toad,
And venom spits on every maid
She meets upon the road.

The virgins all of Bambrough town,
Will swear that they have seen
This spiteful toad, of monstrous size,
Whilst walking they have been.

All folks believe within the shire
This story to be true,
And they all run to Spindleston
The cave and trough to view.

This fact now Duncan Frazier,
Of Cheviot, sings in rhyme,
Lest Bambrougshiremen should forget
Some part of it in time."

CHAPTER XVIII.

A Friend at Breakfast—Something disgraceful—The School-girls—A Glorious Morning—Myriads of Muscles—Sentiments in Shells—A Poet's Thought—A Lounge—Budle Crags—Spindleston Heugh—Commentators on the Worm—Egypt and England—Monkshouse again—I knowed you was a Antiquary—Who stole the Trousers?—The Herring Paper—The Artist's Specimens—The Fisherman's Rubbish—Twilight by the Sea—Ælianus and Æliana.

I HAD a companion at breakfast the next morning, a benevolent, communicative, elderly Quaker, who had trotted all the way from a town on the Wear, on his pony, to change air and scene for his health's sake. We were soon deep in talk, and before breakfast was over, using the privilege of gray hairs, he was calling me by my baptismal name as familiarly as if we had been acquainted for years instead of minutes. He told me some particulars concerning the failure of that Newcastle Bank, showing the consequences of the stupendous crash to be far more cruel and fatal than had yet been made known. If the story of the suffering produced by the disgraceful frauds of 1857 could be written, perhaps it would make the world resolve to be honest, or at least to leave rogues to their deserts. I have since heard that the arch-offender still sits in the high place of the synagogue, as if nought amiss had happened.

The school-girls from the Castle went by on their way to church, some six or eight wearing green frocks

to signify that they were in the the last year of their term. The Quaker—I beg pardon, he could not bring himself to accept that title; his wife could—she liked it; but for his part, he preferred Friend: nor was he willing to agree with me, that Quaker now-a-days implies no more of reproach than Methodist or Baptist. Well, the Friend thought it desirable to shut himsel up for a couple of hours; and I thought it desirable go forth and enjoy the sunshine.

What a glorious morning! Every thing seemed glad, as the poet says, from grass to sun. I strolled away to the Point, and had a delightful bath under the edge of the rocks: then scrambling across the black weedy ridges and broad stony masses, I bent over pools and gullies, and saw in the motionless or gently heaving water, the weeds and creeping things that filled me with wonder and admiration. In some places the rock was coated with young muscles in number incredible, hundreds of thousands. In the larger pools, filled with pale emerald water too deep to wade, the plants and animals seemed yet more wonderful than those in the shallow basins: strange lights fell upon them from the rippling surface. Strange creatures are they moving about; here and there a shell travels slowly; and many a shell lies tenantless. For such a moment as this the Laureate finds us an expression:—

"What is it? a learned man
Could give it a clumsy name.
Let him name it who can,
The beauty would be the same.

The tiny cell is forlorn,
Void of the little living will
That made it stir on the shore.
Did he stand at the diamond door

Of his house in a rainbow frill?
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,
A golden foot, or a fairy horn
Thro' his dim water-world?"

Then reclining on the grassy slope of the Point, I watched the play of the foam on the green water, and across the broad dark shadowy patches created by forests of weeds growing on the bottom; and the succession of light-streaks that went streaming away and away, till they broke on Holy Island. And the sea shared in the universal gladness, and paid homage to Britannia with a multitudinous chorus.

Then inland for a mile, and up a low rocky hill—Budle Crags, whence the prospect opens wide over the level country: the village and castle, and cultivated fields spreading down to the edge of the sand hills; miles of coast, headlands, and gleaming sand to the southward; the deep inlet of Waren Bay on the North, where the famous Budle cockles are taken, where Warnmouth once stood; a port long ago devoured by the sea; and miles of sand beyond, up to the Old Law, and a flickering white speck on the outermost point of Holy Island; and the Farnes, all sharp and distinct, against blue sea and bluer sky.

Then farther inland for about half-an-hour, across fields to a second craggy hill—Spindleston Heugh, the scene of our last night's legend. Some commentators see in the Laidley Worm a personification of the paganism that once prevailed in Northumbria, and in Childy Wynd the purer faith by which it was overcome: or the Worm represents the Danes, and the Childe the Saxons. There is a Worm Hill near Lambton, in the adjoining county of Durham; and a tradition that the loathsome creature was destroyed by

one of the Lambton family, who having put on a suit of armour covered all over with sharp blades of steel, sat on a rock in the middle of a river, and waited the serpent's approach. Hitherto, no sooner was it cut in two or wounded than it immediately reunited; but now it wound around the knight, and was cut into many pieces, and these falling into the river were carried away so quickly by the current that the Worm could never more come together as before.

In Egypt, as travellers tell us, time and climate deal tenderly with things of the Past; and as they were a thousand years ago, so may you see them now. Not so in a land where man, aiding the wind and weather, works ceaseless change. We grow wheat in Roman camps, and turnips on glorious battle-fields, and break up Druidical monuments to mend roads. And here at Spindleston, the stone round which the Worm used to coil and the trough from which it drank the milk, have been displaced by a stone-quarry; but the relics are yet to be seen, as is said, somewhere about the foot of the hill.

The afternoon was far advanced when I left Bamborough for Monkshouse: the Friend accompanying me, leading his pony by the bridle and talking of many things on the way. Turning round from time to time, I could now see how striking and conspicuous an object the castle is in the view from the links. The Friend having taken an observation of *St. Cuthbert's Inn*, mounted his pony: we shook hands, said farewell, and he soon trotted out of sight. The inn was very quiet, as an inn ought to be on Sunday: mine host, who sat reading, was ready with a friendly greeting, and a promise of a fine day on the morrow for the trip to the Islands. It appeared that I had won

the good opinion even of the hostess; for she tried to explain that her churlish behaviour on my first arrival was only her way of testing the quality of the coin before she took it: "I knowed ye was a antiquary," she said, "as soon as I heard ye speak." I took the opportunity to inquire why she should be so mistrustful of a stranger. The reason was, that a man to whom Robin lent a pair of trowsers, got up early one morning, went away, and never came back. That was years ago; but ever since she had been mistrustful.

Robin was studying the *John o' Groat Journal*, a paper which gives full information about the herrings, and is to fishermen what the *Mark Lane Express* is to farmers. But he didn't know how it was, reading always made him sleepy. Then the artist, who had not yet departed, brought in a portfolio, and showed us the collection of seaweeds which he and his wife had made during their sojourn nicely displayed in a book; and as he turned over the beautiful specimens, coming now and then to one of brilliant colour and exquisite form, all the company became eloquent with admiration. Three or four fishermen, who had dropped in for a glass of beer, were lost in astonishment, and one said to the others, "Who'd ha' thought such pretty things was to be found among what we treads on every day as if 'twas rubbish, or worse than rubbish?"

I ended the day with a twilight stroll on the beach. The voice of the sea was no longer sullen as in the fog, but solemn, harmonising with the reflections inspired by the star-lit firmament overhead, and the quiet that prevailed upon the dusky landscape. And who in presence of the stars and the sea feels not thought and emotion crowding upon him beyond all that can be spoken or written?

Returning to the inn, I found Robin in conference with a gentleman and lady from Newcastle, who, desiring a trip to the Islands, had walked over from Bamborough to inquire concerning a boat. He had already promised in my behalf that they might accompany me; and I willingly agreed: so we arranged to meet in the morning.

"'Tis easier to the pocket when three or four go in the same boat," said Robin, as Ælianus and Æliana, as we may call them, walked slowly away and disappeared on the dusky links.

CHAPTER XIX.

Reward of Patience—A Quakerly Rectification—Victualling for a Voyage—Ælianus makes Excuse—A Dead Calm—A Breeze—The Farne—Basaltic Churn—The First Bishop—St. Cuthbert—His Opinion of Women—The Chapel and Castle—The Lighthouse—A Grassy Usurper—Wideopens and Noxes—The Place of Demons—Swedman and Megstone—The Fairway—Wreck of the *Pegasus*—Families of Swimmers—Staple Island—The Pinnacles—A Landing—Rabbits, Eggs, and Birds—Gawky Youngsters; Anxious Oldsters—Tammie Norie—The Brownsman—The Birdkeeper and Gardener—North Wawms—Cormorants—Young Elephants—A Medusa—Big and Little Harcar—Piper Gut—Midden Gut—Longstone Lighthouse—Grace Darling's Father and Sister—The Crumstone: Haunt of Seals—An Editor's Promise—The Forfarshire—Holy Island—The Monastery—History and Romance—Population and Public Houses—The Herring Fleet—The Castle—The Old Law—A Grumble—A Rough Walk—Berwick again.

If patience was ever rewarded, mine was by as fine a day on the morrow as ever dawned. It tempted me out early, and I went strolling along the beach and scrambling up the sandhills till breakfast time. I was not the only early riser, for Robin was already busy with his nets, and my worthy friend the Quaker came trotting briskly up, announcing his approach by a shout. As soon as he drew rein, he said, "I was mistaken in telling thee the rock was limestone: it is sandstone; and I thought I would ride over and tell thee, lest thou make a mistake also." Such benevolence as that deserved and received abundant thanks; and while we chatted the good man alighted and caressed his pony with an affection that was pleasing to witness, as if the four-footed creature were really a companion.

I walked some way with him towards Bamborough, and he parted from me with a real invitation to his house should I ever revisit the banks of the Wear.

In common with Swiss guides, North Sunderland boatmen expect you to feed as well as pay them, so I begged the hostess to see that we had enough to eat; and she being used to that sort of thing, showed me when I came out from breakfast a large basket filled with sandwiches, eggs, and bread, and cheese, and a big stone bottle full of ale. Meanwhile the boat had arrived; the boatman's two boys embarked the provisions, but of the two promised visitors from Newcastle there came only one, and that one was Æliana. Ælianus sent word that he was very sorry, but his foot was a little painful, and he was not sure that he should be able to walk.

"'Tis my belief from what he said last night," whispered Robin, "that the gentleman's a little afraid. But you see his wife isn't."

Æliana explained that she had long wished to see the Isles, and the day being so fine, resolved not to miss the opportunity, and therefore came alone.

The early breeze died completely away before we were half a mile from the shore, and the boys had to row, and what with the bright sun, and the glare reflected from the unruffled water, there seemed a prospect of a good scorching ere noon. The boys pulled lazily, and our voyage was becoming dreamy, when their father, who kept his post at the rudder, cried, "In oars, here comes the wind; up sail, boys!" and there from the east came gliding a broad quivering stream of ripples, nearer and nearer. In a minute our sail swelled out, the boat lay gently over, the ripples prattled merrily under the bow, as we slid away, and

the oppressive sultriness was at once tempered by the quickening coolness of the sea.

The Farne or House Island, the largest of the group, lies about a mile and a half from the shore. On the side towards the mainland it presents a dark range of basaltic cliff to the water rising in some places to a height of eighty feet, with the variety of outline produced by the numerous fissures of that kind of rock, and with the ordinary phenomena consequent thereon. While on the south an isolated mass stands boldly up defiant of the shock of waves, there is on the north-west a deep cavernous fissure, known as the Churn, into which with a gale from the north the water rushes at half-tide with such fury that the rebound from the end of the chasm sends up a great column all foam and spray, to a height of ninety feet, distinctly seen from Monkshouse.

The landing-place is on the eastern side, where the ground falls with a gentle slope to the water. The lighthouse people were ready with offers of service as we stepped on shore; a boy ran off to fetch the key, and the door of the little chapel which stands not far from the landing-place was unlocked. For those who believe in the saints, this is hallowed ground. Aidan, the first bishop of Lindisfarne, about the middle of the seventh century, used to retreat to this island for occasional prayer and meditation. After him came St. Cuthbert in 676, resigning his bishopric, his apostolic journey into the mountainous wilds of the county where he preached to the pagan natives: he gave all up for solitude and devotion. Here near the landing-place he built an oratory which, deeply sunk in the ground, and with walls of sods and lumps of stone, and roof of coarse grass, must have resembled an

Irish cabin. It was circular in form, and divided within into two chambers, one of which was reserved for hours of prayer; and in that rude abode the saint dwelt for nine years, during which time he set up a stone cross and erected an hospitium for the lodging of the pilgrims and visitors who came to him from afar seeking instruction or his blessing. The holy man, however, found time for tillage amid his devotions and penances, and raised crops of barley by means which were then regarded as miraculous; and he caused, as is said, two wells to flow where fresh water was never seen before. In our day water may be found without any other miracle than digging; but when found it is brackish and scarcely drinkable.

After all it was a less undesirable residence than that of Simon Stylites; but what was St. Cuthbert's motive in choosing the lonely Farne? Did he love austerity and seclusion; or the dash of waves and roaring of storms; was it overpowering devotion, or dread of the female sex? We are told that he had a pious horror of women, and forbade the keeping of cows by monks because "where there is a cow there must be a woman, and where there is a woman there must be mischief." However, let us not forget that when King Alfred lay an almost hopeless fugitive two centuries later, in Somersetshire, St. Cuthbert appeared to him in a vision and promised him success. When in 684 he was elected Bishop of Hexham, and King Egfrid attended by the archbishop and his nobles, rowed off to the Island and besought him on bended knees to accept the office, he refused; but afterwards yielded so far as to take the Bishopric of Lindisfarne. Even of that, though an island in the sea, he grew weary in two years, and, giving up his dignities,

withdrew once more to the lonely Farne, where he died in 687.

No trace now remains of oratory or hospitium: the latter, however, stood for five hundred years. But the boy has returned with the key, and we have walked up the slope towards the chapel, and a building that has somewhat the appearance of a peel, where a few old stone coffins and a slab which has been a tombstone lie on the grass. The chapel is a venerable relic, with walls perhaps seven hundred years old.

It would have probably shared the fate of the obscure ruin adjoining, had not Archdeacon Thorp caused it to be repaired and restored in 1848. It is but a little place, forty feet in length, and has now oaken seats, and a row of carved stalls along the sides, all dark with age, and supplied from the Cathedral at Durham. Although these fittings are of sombre hue and have the true mediæval character, there seems a want of harmony between them and the relic of the olden time which they adorn. Still, further decay is prevented; and when opportunity for public worship offers, which is I believe about twice a year, the lighthouse keepers can attend.

Were we forgetful of one of the heroic incidents in the history of the Islands, the monument erected to the memory of Grace Darling would remind us thereof: and few will refuse assent to the inscription from Wordsworth's pen:—

> "The maiden gentle, yet at duty's call
> Firm and unflinching as the lighthouse rear'd
> On the island rock, her lonely dwelling-place;
> Or, like the invincible rock itself, that braves,
> Age after age, the hostile elements
> As when it guarded holy Cuthbert's cell."

Prior Castle's Tower is the name of the adjoining

building, which with its thick walls and vaulted basement, shows us what was thought desirable for defence as well as lodging at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Later, and until the present lighthouse was built, a beacon fire was burned every night on its top. This too has been repaired, by Archdeacon Thorp—and more of the blessed light of heaven now finds its way in than ever before: and a look of comfort is imparted by the old wainscot, also brought from Durham, which now conceals the walls. It affords a temporary residence to the Venerable gentleman and his friends.

Not far beyond the Tower we see St. Cuthbert's Gut, a chasm in the basalt; and in a walk thence round the edge of the cliff we may note the broken features of the rock, look down into the Churn, and take a passing glance at the lighthouse which stands on the highest ground. The extent of the Island is about sixteen acres, more rock than grass. It looks bare notwithstanding the verdure, for although the monks formerly kept horses and cattle here, and sheep were fed until within the past six years, not one is now to be seen. If you ask the reason why, the answer is that the animals do not thrive, and yet there is reason to believe that they throve in former days. One remarkable result is, but more marked on some of the outer islands, that the grasses most suitable as feed for sheep and cattle disappear, and the sea campion, with its white flowers and creeping root, usurps its place: a fact which botanists will know how to appreciate.

Next beyond Farne lie the East and West Wideopens and the Noxes, a group of islets united by a bank of great rounded stones, as may be seen at low-water. The channel which we cross in approaching is shallow, and in many places the bottom is plainly seen: patches

of gleaming white sand, or forests of weeds with living things darting and creeping among the tremulous fronds. When St. Cuthbert first came to Farne he had little rest till he had succeeded in banishing the demons which haunted the Island; but the malignant spirits retreated no farther than the Wedums, as the Wideopens were formerly called, and there, in stormy weather they could be heard shrieking and howling, while dancing amid the clouds of spray. In the life of St. Bartholomew of Durham, who lived forty-two years in St. Cuthbert's oratory, we are told that the brethren used at times when resting from their labours to see the demons "clad in cowls and riding upon goats, black in complexion, short in stature, their countenances most hideous, their heads long, and the whole pack horrible in appearance. At first," continues the biographer, "the sight of the Cross was sufficient to repel their attacks; but in the end the only protection was a fence of straws, signed with the Cross and fixed in the sands, around which the devils galloped for awhile and then retired, leaving the brethren to enjoy victory and repose." The Wideopens were a place of fear in another respect, for there were buried the bodies of shipwrecked seamen; but now the visitor finds nothing more formidable than rabbits, rats, and seafowl.

Then we saw in the north-west two well-known rocks, the Swedman and Megstone, and we came to the Fairway, a channel about a mile wide, and deep enough for the largest ships, which separates the Islands. Vessels sometimes sail through it as a short cut, but not without risk from the Ox Scars, a dangerous cluster of rocks. It was while making for the Fairway that the *Pegasus* steamer struck on the Goldstone: and many a

gallant ship has perished with all hands on the treacherous reefs of these rocky Isles.

The nearer we came to the outer group the more numerous did we find the birds. Thousands were swimming on the water; young broods learning how to take care of themselves, under the eye of their parents. As the boat glided among them the boys thought to capture some of the inexperienced fledgelings; but no sooner was a hand stretched out than in a twinkling they dived, and came up only when far out of reach, and it was interesting to watch the reassembling of the family. Group after group formed and gathered together again in a general flock, and a pretty sight it was to see their graceful forms rising and falling on the heaving water.

Presently we are near the basaltic cliffs of Staple Island, and our captain steers within a few feet of the Pinnacles, great detached masses, that we may note their grim forms, and the gap which separates them from the precipice, a gap noisy with the fretful dash of waves, and the cries of numberless birds. Then round the bluff and into a bay where the boat is brought handsomely alongside the rocks, and we scramble on shore. We see less vegetation than on Farne; in some places the surface resembles an old bleached rush mat; the soil, pierced with innumerable rabbit burrows, trembles as we walk upon it, and their timid inhabitants dart hither and thither in terror. Soon we were among the eggs and had to tread warily, for lying anywhere upon the turf, and without any appearance of a nest, they might easily be crushed. A few weeks earlier, and for one we should have seen a hundred. And where were the young birds; had they all taken wing? The boys soon answered the question by starting a few

gawky things from their lurking places; and it was amusing to see how they betook themselves to another refuge. An inexperienced eye might easily miss them, for their colour is so similar to that of the ground, and they crouch so closely in every corner and crevice, as at first sight to appear as part of the surface. Once aware of the fact, I made discoveries for myself, and did not find the infancy of sea-birds particularly attractive. I was careful not to hurt them, yet they seemed as fearful, as if their few days of existence had been all persecution. And all the while the old ones flew wheeling and screeching over our heads, showing by unmistakeable signs how much they resented our intrusion. Now and then they alight at a little distance; choosing always some hummock or ridge, or elevation however slight, where they stand and watch with vigilant eye. And a curious sight it is to see the ground dotted with birds whichever way you look.

We went up to the brow of the cliff fronting the Pinnacles, and in what we saw there I realised many a description of the habits of seafowl. The detached masses which are flat as a table on the top, and the cliff, are of the same height—about forty feet—and the gap between is some twelve feet wide, enough for safety, as the birds seem to know, for they crowd so thickly on the outlying tables, as to completely hide the summits. And everywhere down the sides, every ledge and nook, every projection that affords foothold has its occupant, sometimes a family. Here and there lies an egg, and you wonder it does not roll off; but if you look at those we have picked up, you see the shape to be conical with straight sides, not bulging as the eggs laid in a nest; hence their tendency to roll down a slope is neutralised. Here and there sit three or four

young ones in a row, their yellow bills and white downy breasts contrasting prettily with the dark rock; motionless all the time of our stay. Not so those on the top: they jerk their heads up and down with ceaseless movement, and chatter and screech deridingly—at least, so it sounds. There are gulls, puffins, terns, guillemots, kittiewakes, and other kinds, which the boys call sea-swallows, and sea-parrots. At times you may see that bird of curious beak mentioned in the rhyme—

"Tammie Norie o' the Bass
Canna' kiss a pretty lass."

There is nothing plaintive, nothing musical in their notes; but their voice is harsh and discordant, as if intended only to accompany the sea in its angriest moods.

So novel a scene detained us a long time; we could not weary of watching it, as apart from the birds, there was the charm of the clear green water, rushing and swirling round the base of the Pinnacles, now and then leaping up in long foamy tongues, that threatened the broods on the lowest ledges; while all around lay the desolate rocks and Isles, washed by the sea rolling and flashing in the glorious sunshine.

But we have much to do before the day is over, and must return to the boat. A few minutes bring us to the Brownsman, an Isle distinguished by signs of habitation; the old tower was formerly used for the coal-fire beacon, and the cottage is the residence during the season of the bird-keeper, who comes to meet us with a gun on his shoulder. We hand our pass to him and a glass of beer, which he drinks to our health, and with a familiar nod to the boatman, who in return asks him if he wants anything from the main, for he is

coming off on the morrow with stores. The keeper has long hours of leisure during his three or four months' residence, and devotes himself to gardening, in which, by dint of painstaking, he raises cabbages and potatoes for himself and the family at the light-house. He is fond of the garden, he says; it keeps time from hanging heavy on his hands, and he has only to lift his head from time to time to look out for poachers, and for unaccredited parties. With a pass obtained at Bamborough Castle, you may visit all the Islands; without one, not more than two or three. But if it be right to keep off unlawful sportsmen, is it also right to take lawful bushels of eggs and send them away? To me it seems far more desirable to let the birds multiply as much as possible; for what is there in our humdrum civilisation to compensate us for the loss of myriads of the wild creatures enjoying their freedom in the air and on the waters?

"Now you shall see the cormorants," said the boatman, as we stretched across to the Wawmses, two islets farther to seaward. With increasing distance from the coast, so are there more signs of barrenness, and the cries of the birds assert a fuller prerogative. We landed on North Wawms, choosing a spot where the boat could lie quietly between the weedy rocks, and made our way towards the western side of the little territory. What a rugged surface! Patches of peaty soil, ridges and slopes of rock, fissured and split in all directions, here and there forming gullies which we had to cross. Æliana was resolute to see all that could be seen, and scrambled over the rough ground, without playing off foolish airs. The eider-duck breeds here, contrasting in its quiet habit with the noisy tribes that haunt the islet, and retaining still the gentleness with

which, as the monkish chroniclers tell us, it was first inspired by St. Cuthbert, who loved the eider-duck above all other sea-fowl, and trained it to build near his oratory. As for the gulls, the puffins, and sheldrakes, their cries as they hovered above our heads were well-nigh deafening; and it was curious to see how they rose at our approach, and settled down once more as we advanced, so that we had a flock of birds always behind and before us on the ground, and one attending us with wild shrieks in the air. Anon, we saw a range of black objects sitting, as it seemed, on thick cushions, and were aware of a noisome smell of fish. They were the cormorants on their nests; and as we came nearer, one after another flapped its wings, rose sullenly, and flew circling over us, now and then sweeping down on a sudden close to our heads, and mingling their harsh croaking cry with the general din.

The nests are conical mounds of seaweed, about two feet in height, built up on the ledges of rock, and on these the birds sit a-straddle, as a man on horseback, the eggs being laid in a slight hollow on the top. There were but few eggs left unhatched, and in each nest lay one, two, or three of the naked, ugly, wobbling creatures, tossing their heads about, looking, as the boy said, "just like young elephants." To one little gentleman, which with shrill outcry was making vehement efforts to struggle out of the shell, I lent a finger of assistance, for which he did not appear to be grateful, and yet, no sooner was he fairly warmed by the sun, than he grew to a size far too big for his late tenement, and opened his mouth for food. In some of the nests I saw portions of fish newly caught, and the base of every one was bestrewn with small fish of

various kinds, for the most part in an offensive state of decomposition, which, combined with an overpowering smell of guano, renders long observation of domestic economy among the cormorants a nauseous kind of pleasure under a July sun.

As we withdrew, the anxious parents flew back to their nests, and held a noisy and most unmelodious parley with their little ones. I could hardly imagine them to be sentimental; for in three weeks those featherless younglings would be picking up their own living. The boatman, for his part, said with solemn air, that it would be a good thing if all the cormorants were shot; "because, you see, they're the greediest after fish of any bird on the Islands." As if there were not fish enough in the sea, and to spare!

Then we dined, and with an appetite that made a considerable impression on the basket and bottle; and while floating there on the margin of the rocks, I thought that a naturalist would have been in raptures with the abundant "wonders of the shore" visible in the shallow water, and the little pools left by the tide. Among them was a magnificent specimen of a medusa, large as a wash basin, and crimson in colour, which floated so slowly past the boat, as to give us ample time for admiration. While the basin itself appeared transparent, the edge or brim showed of a deeper tinge, and in the centre the ovaries stood up dark and rough, like rich velvety tassels.

We made sail once more, steering for the lighthouse, passing Big and Little Harcar, and Pifa, or Piper Gut, as the boatman calls it, through which sets a strong current. Then we crossed the Midden Gut, and its stream that runs at times seven miles an hour, dangerous even to the experienced. Beyond it we see the

Crumstone, the farthermost rock, and a household word from Coquet to Tweed. And there before us lies the Longstone, the foundation of the lighthouse, and the tall red tower looks surprisingly large, now that we are near. A party of visitors push off as we arrive at the landing-place; but there still remains a numerous group at the landing-place—men, women, and children.

Grace Darling's sister, a quiet-looking, middle-aged woman, of respectful manner, welcomed us to the lighthouse, and led the way up to the sitting-room. It has a comfortable look, and something more, with its collection of books, natural curiosities, engravings of the memorable rescue, and family portraits. Doubly precious must a library be in such a spot! Presently, old Darling, Grace's father, came up, and apparently as a matter of course, showed us a copy of the letter which he wrote the day after the fatal wreck in September, 1838, to inform the Secretary of the Trinity Board of the adventure which made his daughter's name famous among heroines.

After a little talk, we went up to the lantern and out upon the gallery, whence, the tower being sixty-three feet high, there is a good prospect over the Islands. The old man pointed out the course which he and Grace took on their way to the wreck; and explained that his wife had helped to launch the boat, that Grace knew how to pull an oar, but to pull half a mile or more through a furious sea was no easy task for a girl. He did not know how they should have got the boat back to the lighthouse against the tide, had not some of the men whom they saved been able to row. Most of the engravings published of the adventure were cunning exaggerations: the only true picture of it that he knew of was the one hanging over

the mantelpiece: and formidable enough it appears there in all conscience. My eye roved over the scene as we talked, looking down on the twenty-seven Isles and islets as a panorama. Here, nearly six miles from the shore, the isolation appears somewhat awful; and we may think that the courage of the residents was tried in the storm some years ago, which brought in such tremendous waves, that they had to seek the upper chambers of the lighthouse. The Longstone, rising but four feet above highwater mark, is swept by every gale with fierce drifts of spray and foam; hence its vegetation is of the scantiest, including but five kinds of plants, among which the sea mat-grass predominates. Far different from the present scene; for now children are at play on the rock; the poultry look as if the weather were always fine to them; clothes are hanging out to dry; and two boys, who have just come in from fishing, are cleaning and washing their capture, throwing the refuse over the stern of their boat, and the young gulls hovering round, dart down with a shriek, and seize the dainty morsels sometimes before they touch the water. "We get codlings and puddlers," said the keeper.

Bare as the Longstone is, a rock chequered with gaps and fissures, it is not so bare as the Crumstone, which lies there below us about a mile to the south. There nothing grows which belongs to the land, and the birds cannot build, for it is covered by every tide; and the seal, an animal we scarcely think of except as a tenant of Arctic Seas, makes it his resting-place; and there, in the month of November, the young seals pass their fourteen days of nursing and training, wherein they learn to get their own living. Cormorants use it too as a fishing-station, they, as well as the

seals, having forsaken the Longstone since the building of the lighthouse.

Meeting thus with a family on a lonely rock, and in a habitation whose essential purpose depends on cleanliness and order, imparts an agreeable finishing touch to the visit to the Islands. The lawless waves have not the sole empire; and to hear the voices of children on a spot so often swept by the roar of the tempest, inspires an emotion not soon forgotten. Their weakness and innocence appear in stronger relief associated with the tremendous convulsions that sometimes shake the scene of their sports. And here, when weary of looking at the sky and the water, the parents may enjoy the pleasures of reading, and recreate their minds with books. One of the party that pushed off as we arrived, said Darling, was a Newcastle editor, who had promised to send him a newspaper for the rest of his life.

At length we said farewell; the boys hoisted the sail, and we took our departure for Holy Island, staying for a few minutes while passing the Harcars, to look at the place where the *Forfarshire* struck. The rocks are weedy and slippery, but we scrambled up to the edge of the gap, into which the ill-fated vessel drifted, and where the after part broke off, and sank with most of the passengers. It is but a narrow gap; too narrow, you would think, to take in a steamer, yet there lies the half of one of the ponderous working-beams still at the bottom, plainly to be seen: too heavy to be worth removal when the wreck was cleared away.

The loss of the *Forfarshire* was one of those avoidable disasters which are sure to befall when traders trust to chance rather than to principle. Had her

boilers been sound, she would, in all probability, have reached her port. She left Hull for Dundee, with sixty-three persons on board, including passengers and crew, passed through the Fairway here in the evening, and had arrived off St. Abb's Head, when, owing to the leaks in the boilers, the fires were drowned out, and the vessel, becoming unmanageable, drifted away before the northerly gale through the fearful night, and about three o'clock in the morning rushed into this fatal gap on the Harcars. Nine persons escaped in one of the boats, and were picked up next day by a coasting sloop; nine others were rescued by the Darlings; all the rest perished.

Soon we are clear of the Islands, and have a six miles' run before us. The boys foreseeing perhaps an hour's quiet, stretch themselves on the thwarts, and go to sleep, and away we glide with a gentle motion that invites to drowsiness. Æliana is full of talk about what we have seen, and says she has never before made such good use of her eyes on a pleasure-trip. Anon we are abreast of Bamborough, and the castle and the pale yellow shore; and Budle Crags have a shadowy appearance under the hot afternoon sun, and you might almost imagine the scene to be a picture with hazy outlines. The voyage of the galley again recurs to memory, when the abbess and her maids—

> "Thy tower, proud Bamborough, marked they there
> King Ida's Castle, huge and square;
> From its tall rock look grimly down,
> And on the swelling ocean frown."

The skipper remains watchful, and points out buoys where I can see nothing except with the telescope; and when we see the Goldstone, the rock on which the *Pegasus* struck, he says with an air of authority, "there

was some excuse for the loss of the *Forfarshire*, but none for the *Pegasus*;" and that it was best for the captain he did not survive the catastrophe. By-and-by we begin to make out the features of Holy Island; the castle looks like a castle, and a few houses of the village appear on the bluff. The two boys are waked with a shout, and bidden to look alive, for we have come to the channel marked by two tall red beacons on the shore between the Island and the main, and meet the tide, and they must make a few tacks, and pull at the oars before we get to the landing-place.

In this channel the Earl of Tankerville has an oyster-bed, concerning which a noticeable fact is related: namely, that one winter the tide fell so low that the oysters were all laid bare and killed by frost; and the bed was renewed by oysters brought from the mouth of the Forth.

We land beneath the bluff on a bare stony beach; the boys are left in charge of the boat, the skipper thinks he will call on his sister, whom he has not seen for months, while the two passengers ascend the steep and cross the field to the monastery. At sight of the venerable ruin, we are reminded once more of *Marmion*, and truly the bard's description is so truthful and appropriate, that we may refresh ourselves therewith by way of change.

"In Saxon strength that abbey frown'd
With massive arches broad and round,
That rose alternate, row on row,
On ponderous columns short and low,
Built ere the art was known,
By pointed aisle, and shafted stalk,
The arcades of an alley'd walk
To emulate in stone.
On the deep walls, the heathen Dane
Had pour'd his impious rage in vain;

And needful was such strength to these,
Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
Scourged by the winds' eternal sway,
Open to rovers fierce as they,
Which could twelve hundred years withstand
Winds, waves, and northern pirates' hand.
Not but that portions of the pile,
Rebuilded in a later style,
Show'd where the spoiler's hand had been;
Not but the wasting sea-breeze keen
Had worn the pillars' carving quaint,
And moulder'd in his niche the saint,
And rounded, with consuming power,
The pointed angles of each tower;
Yet still entire the abbey stood,
Like veteran, worn, but unsubdued."

Judging from appearances, the dark red structure—which, by the way, is Romanesque in style—will stand much longer, for it is properly protected by fences and walls. The Rainbow, as it has been called, one of the tower arches, still hangs aloft, with its diagonal span, too light, as it seems, for the massive columns ranged below. The west front is in good preservation, having a deep Norman doorway with bold mouldings. The south aisle and south side of the nave are gone; but you can see one of the row of arches, narrower than the rest, compressed into a horseshoe form; and there are appearances which show that the nave was once roofed with stone. Among the outbuildings the big kitchen chimney remains; and many a rare effect of light and shade and contrast of colour will you get while wandering about the ruin.

From lying opposite to the brook Lindis, the island was in ancient days called Lindisfarne; but Aidan, the first bishop, invited and encouraged by Oswald, left his retreat at Iona, and having built the first church, earnest monks and the renowned saint followed, and the name was changed to Holy Island. That first

church had walls of oaken balks and a roof of reeds; and it is well to remember that Aidan, and the monarch his friend, were both of that Christian Church which already had communities in the North of England before St. Augustine landed with his missionaries in Kent.

Thoughts chase one another strangely through the mind while we stroll beneath the time-worn arches: now of groups of wondering listeners as the first Christian teacher told his errand; now of the wild Sea-Kings sweeping all before them with fire and sword; now of a monastery renowned for its sanctity, attracting pilgrims from all parts of Christendom. Not all the works of those old monks are as ruinous as their abode, for many of their books yet remain: some preserved in that cathedral which looks down on the Wear, and one in the British Museum. You may see it, reader, the next time you go there, a thick volume, described as the *Durham Manuscript*, bound in jewelled covers, lying in the glass-case. It is a copy of the Gospels in Latin, the work, as a memorandum in Anglo-Saxon informs us, of three monks of Lindisfarne. The learned Egfrith wrote the Latin text: Adred interlined it with a Saxon gloss; and Bildrid put in the illuminations. I was permitted one day to turn over the leaves of the precious volume, and it seemed to me a wonderful thing when associated with sea-beaten Lindisfarne.

Anon, recollections of the minstrel's romance deceive us for a moment into seeking for the "dread vault" wherein Constance the unhappy nun suffered her terrible doom. Imagination brings the scene before us: we see that darksome cell, we hear "that blind old Abbot" pronounce his judgment, we listen breathless

to the hapless maiden's reply, the deep booming of the bell that startled the deer on distant Cheviot breaks on our ears; and for a few brief moments the genius sleeping in the tomb at Dryburgh holds us fast in its powerful spell.

While crossing the churchyard, we notice a remarkable contrast with the abodes of the living, in the numerous large and ornamental gravestones and the elaborate tombs, and you will perhaps think that the pains bestowed on memorials of the dead would be better employed within the village, or "the town," as the natives fondly call it. There is a square bestrewn with unsavoury rubbish, and the condition of the streets accords therewith, implying that public cleanliness has not yet grown into a habit. The spring is a good way off. Whitewashed cottages, some of them retaining the primitive thatch, constitute the bulk of the dwellings, while among those of better style appear nine inns or public-houses. In the last census returns the population of the island is given as 908, of whom 458 are males; hence, excluding the boys, we may form a notion as to the number of customers to each public house. It is said that if good lodgings were available, the Island would be more visited than it is by sea-bathers; but the difficulty of access and the want of pleasant scenery are perhaps the chief reasons against immigration.

We saw "the town" under its busy aspect, preparing for the herring fishery; nets lay in heaps, or stretched out fifty or sixty yards, while men and boys disentangle their mazy folds and tie the loops; around almost every door lies a heap of floats, and lines, and queer-looking oil-skin garments, and ample sou'westers hang on the walls. And at times a few men, wearing thick

sea-going jackets, and boots up to their hips, take their way down to the beach with a pile of gear on their shoulders. They will sail ere long, for rumour says the herrings are in the offing.

Here and there you may see a potato-plot, and a garden with a few flowers and vegetables, and in sheltered corners an elder-tree in blossom; but of other trees, as we shall presently discover, there is a general lack; and judging from appearances most of the population are of Long Tom Coffin's opinion that all the land is good for is to grow vegetables on.

The castle stands about half a mile eastward of the village. On our way thither, we passed the beach where the fishing-boats come in, and saw the huge wooden vat—if vat it be—round which the women stand to clean the herrings, and on the other side of the road fourteen hundred herring-barrels in piles and rows, and two men industrious over their final preparation. "There wouldn't be any too many," they said, "nor yet half enough, if the boats did but have luck."

The castle occupies the entire summit of a singular conical hill; seems, indeed, to grow naturally out of it. The approach is by a road winding round the steep slope, whence a stair brings you to the lower platform. The building is used now as a coast-guard station, and is well suited for the purpose, for it commands the view in all directions. We can see down to Emanuel Head, the outermost point of the Island, a bare desolate-looking spot marked by a white beacon, and we see where the bare region merges into the fields of grass, wheat, and barley that cover the central area; but cultivation notwithstanding, the scene looks naked for want of trees.

Let us go to the upper platform; while in the passage and on the stair we see that the castle may be described as barracks on a small scale, and not particularly comfortable. Though it formerly had a garrison, and was once surprised in "the Fifteen," and captured and held for a couple of days by two very loyal Northumbrian Jacobites, it is peaceable enough now. Perchance you may see clothes hanging to dry on the platform, while the narrow slip of ground under the southern wall is made to yield potatoes.

From the higher elevation the sea is visible all round the Island: a circumference of about nine miles. The summits of Cheviot are within sight; we can see Berwick, and the lofty arches of the railway-bridge across the Tweed, and St. Abb's Head, terminating the coast view miles away to the north, with huge cliffs stretching out upon the dark blue waters. On the Island itself you see one or two farms, and a few cattle grazing in the fields; a large patch of green engirdled by the bald, brown slope of the shore. Only in one spot did I see any indication of gleaming sands.

While recrossing the herring beach, we had a pretty sight in the departure of a number of the boats. The tide served, evening was coming on, and one after another they hoisted sail, stood out of the bay, made a tack, some two tacks, and then away to the open sea, perhaps for five-and-twenty miles.

It was now time to think of our own departure. There is a way across the sands, about three miles to the main shore, near the Beal railway-station: Beal, once the residence of the Irish Saint Begog. It is marked by a line of posts fixed in the sand; but the tide rises as of old—

"And girdles in the Saint's domain;
For, with the ebb and flow, its style
Varies from continent to isle;
Dryshod, o'er sands, twice every day
The pilgrims to the shrine find way;
Twice every day the waves efface
Of staves and sandall'd feet the trace."

And though instead of pilgrims we should now meet a fisherman or a licensed victualler driving a cart, we should find "dryshod" to be a poetical fiction, and there is always a stream more or less wide which must be waded. Walking on plashy sands is not agreeable, especially with nothing to interest you on the way; and remembering how uneasy I once felt while crossing the sands on foot from Lancaster to Ulverstone, I resolved to try the boat.

To the Old Law, a sandy spit projecting from the opposite shore, the site of the two tall red beacons, the distance is about half a mile. I gathered up my equipments, shook hands with Æliana, who had won my respect by her cheerfulness and extraordinary good sense, paid my share of the cost to the boatmen, the other to be paid when he landed the lady at Bamborough, and, after the manner of boatmen, he grumbled. He received the payment he bargained for; he and his boys had as much as they would to eat and drink, and more, for there was some left, and yet he grumbled. However, I felt no sympathy with his discontent, and the stern of the boat having been grounded, within a few feet of the water's edge, I leaped into the shallow ripples, and strode away quickly across the spit, for I saw that the depression in its rear was all but covered by the tide swelling up on each side. The water met just as I had passed.

What a wild scene lay before me when I scrambled

up the sand-hills! A rough trackless region; great straggling patches of reedy grass; great uneven patches of bare sand, where your foot slips back at every step; then patches of gorse, wanton brambles, dense beds of fern, and roods of heath. Crossing all this up and down, and in and out, is very tough walking. I shaped a course at a venture for Belford station, some five miles distant, and came after a while to smoother ground, and a lane by a farm-place, and so on between hedgerows to the hamlet of Easington, and thence across fields to the station, where I arrived in time for the last train to Berwick.

I went back to my former quarters at the *Red Lion*, and finished the evening in company with a Northumbrian clergyman, who had taken a day's ramble along the shore in quest of new species of mollusca, visiting Holy Island on the way. His success had not been great, but he hoped for better fortune on his return the next day. He had walked across from the Island by the Pilgrims' track, and though he had to take off his shoes and stockings, the tide was too low for anything more serious than wet feet. It is nevertheless true that people have been drowned while crossing Fenham Flats, as the sands are called.

The day seemed long as I looked back upon it, yet not too long; and I went to bed overcharged, in a sense, with pleasurable emotions.

CHAPTER XX.

Up Tweedside—An Enviable Walk—Salmon-fishers—A Lucky Spate—A Crack with a Radical—The way Sneaks Vote—The Plucky Blacksmith—The Kettle—Mr. Newte's Description—Outcry from Crows' Nests—Horncliff Hill—Norham Castle—Reminiscences—The Traitor's Reward—What Leland says—Marmion—A Good Rector—The Legate's Adventure—Ladykirk—View of the Vale—Knowing it Fine—Dirty Mothers; Shy Children—Twizell Bridge—The Till—Tillmouth Chapel—The Blue-Bell—Rainy-day for a Battlefield—Flodden—A Baptism in Blinkbonny—Scenes of Battle—What might have happened had the Scots beaten—A Start for Cornhill.

AGAIN delightful weather on the morrow. The clergyman was as ready to profit by it as myself, and our breakfast over, we walked together down to the wall overlooking the river. There we parted; he to make for the pier and get a cast across to Spittal Point in one of the salmon boats, and I for a walk up the Tweed. It is a walk rich in promise of enjoyment. Do you not envy me, gracious reader? Never mind; though you were not there, let us see if we cannot enjoy it together. After the first mile it will be all new to me.

We cross and ascend the right bank, whence there is a good view of the bold heights opposite, crowned by houses, traversed by the ancient wall, with its bastions: the green slope striped with paths, the railway-station looking like a castle, the towering railway-bridge with its row of great round arches, the broad river flowing past, all combine to make up a striking picture. The

old bridge, many-arched though it be, appears insignificant by the side of its mighty rival; and to look up as we walk beneath the soaring structure makes us feel dwarf-like.

'Tis highwater, and Tweed looks his proudest. Seaweeds and marine grasses growing along the margin reveal the nearness of the sea; but these become fewer as we advance, and long before we are weary of cheerful meadows and wooded slopes, will have disappeared. The river winds; new views open, the bends marked by a bluff, now on the right, now on the left bank: and there on the left, the Whitadder, a stream well known to anglers, pours in its tribute. Presently we come to a fishing-station; a shiel, that is, a small one-roomed cottage, a cool stone vault for the fish, with the complement of seven or eight men, and two boats. They have just hauled in the net and caught nothing; and one of the boats is already started for a fresh cast. Then the bank rises to a considerable elevation and abuts precipitously on the river, and looking back from the brow, we see the broad slopes of Halidown Hill, no longer a waste, but chequered with fields. The breeze blows merrily up here, the leaves rustle as if they too were merry, and you feel inclined to pity the passengers shut up in the train which rattles past, speeding to Kelso. The turnips wag their leaves; the wheat-field rolls with quick, green waves, and makes a chorus of sound, as we pass through it to the pasture beyond, where the turf is so elastic that we seem to dance along. Truly, if but for its natural advantages, the vale of Tweed is an inviting place!

A little farther, and the bank is broken by a steep and deep gulley, steep as a Devonshire coomb. The descent brings us down to another fishing-station,

where there is the same report of bad luck as lower down. "How can you expect to catch fish," I said, "when there are so many nets below to stop them?"

"There's fish enough gets up the river," answered one of the men, "there's fish enough gets up, but the folk in the west country don't let many come down again."

From the height beyond, there is a view of Berwick, and surprisingly near, considering the time we have spent in walking hither. And we can look down on an island in the river, a pretty bright green oval dotted with haycocks. By and by we find obstructions in the way, and have to plunge down through the trees from the top of the bank to its base, and pursue the path along the margin of the stream; a change which deprives us of the breeze, but brings us within hearing of the rippling water. Presently, another station; more men and boats, but nothing in the fish-vault except one small grilse, that is, a young salmon. These fishing stations belong to the Berwick Company, who supply all the material and employ the men during the season. A boat comes up the river every morning, and on plentiful days in the evening also, to collect the salmon, grilse, and trout that have been caught: all other kinds fall to the men's share. On very lucky days too, each man is allowed a pound and a-half of salmon for himself. "You see," said one of the party whom I engaged in talk, "the Company find shiels for us to lodge in, and coals and kettles, and pays us thirteen shillings a-week. Not bad, you see, as times go; we don't want so much to eat as them as works harder:" which struck me as a refined way of putting the question of wages. Seeing that the salmon only enter the river with the flood tide, it follows that the catchers can have but little to do while the water is falling.

The party were unanimous in wishing for a northerly wind, or a "spate," either of which would give the fish a start. How it was during the next fortnight I know not; but the spate came with a vengeance at the end of July, when a heavy rain in the hills astonished the river with a sudden freshet, and in one day five thousand salmon and grilses were taken, to say nothing of trout. Some of these lower fisheries caught six hundred fish each; more in one day than at times in a whole season.

The oldest man of the party wanted to have a crack. "Crack away," I said, and sat down by his side. He was of grim, somewhat patriarchal countenance, but with a twinkle, suggestive of dry humour, in his eye.

"There's Wully, going at it again," said the others; and they gathered round, knowing from experience that the old radical was going to talk politics.

"You genelmen up in Lunnon," he began, "wants settin' to rights a bit;" and he thought it might be done by the north-country folk who were of his way of thinking. He would like to cut the expenses down, and give the poor man a chance; and the way to do that would be to have vote by ballot.

"Don't be too sure of that," I answered, "sneaks and knaves will still be sneaks and knaves with vote by ballot."

"How do ye ken that?"

"By having seen it for five years in the State of New York. And if you or any one else thinks it better to cry for vote by ballot than to withstand those who put on the screw, go and live in America for five years, and you will come home wiser men."

"How do ye vote?" rejoined the "old un."

"Not for Orator Plausible, who advocates vote by

ballot: and promises the multitude, already too well inclined to resort to sneaks and subterfuges, that he will do his best to help them to one grand subterfuge by act of parliament."

"Hech! and ye'll no go in for vote by ballot?"

"Not I; and because I know that intimidation and bribery will be just as easy then as now. Moreover, if voters would only refuse to be intimidated, and vote always for the best man, the intimidators would be shamed into something like fairplay."

"At him again, Wully," cried the men; and Wully returned to the charge with, "How do ye vote, yoursel'?"

"Can't you guess?" I answered: "Not for the man who can't make up his own mind, but wants his constituents to do it for him; not for the man who wants to be only a delegate; not for the man who persuades working-men that 'tis the rich who trample on them, and therefore they ought to emigrate; not for an attorney; nor yet for a railway-king, or swindling bank-director. And if that won't satisfy you, take a word from the song of *The Plucky Blacksmith*:—

"'Let master threat, or landlord frown,
And warn of quarter-day;
I'll vote for whomsoe'er I like,
Let who will say me nay.

"'I'll not be bought, and won't be sold,
My vote is all my own;
So keep your bribes at home, my boys,
And just let me alone.'"

I should perhaps have made a speech; but at this moment the boat which had had a long struggle against the rapid stream came back to the landing, and the men had to go and haul in the net. Wully had to go also; he smiled grimly, waded in nearly to the top of his boots, and pulled with an angry sort of tug that seemed to

indicate a stronger conviction than ever in his own opinion. Before the net came home I went on my way.

A custom prevails in these parts of holding what may be described as a salmon-picnic. "The Kettle," as the party or club is technically called, appoint a day, and come together at some part of the river agreed on, provided with the elements of a feast. The fish already bespoken are kept alive in the river till the last moment, and are then transferred to the kettle and boiled, and eaten with the adjuncts; and sports and pastimes end the holiday. I fell in with a man at Jedburgh who told me he belonged to the "Tweed-mouth Kettle," which at its last gathering ate fifty pounds of salmon. And as for sauce, any one born within sight of Berwick will tell you that the best of all sauce for salmon is a little of the liquor in which it was boiled.

This kind of festivity is not a new invention, as appears by the following passage from Mr. Newte's *Tour of a Gentleman*, published in 1788:—"It is customary," he says, "for the gentlemen who live near the Tweed to entertain their neighbours and friends with a Fête Champêtre, which they call giving '*a kettle of fish.*' Tents or marquees are pitched near the flowery banks of the river, on some grassy plain; a fire is kindled, and live salmon thrown into boiling kettles. The fish, thus prepared, is very firm, and accounted a most delicious food. Everything in season is added to furnish a luxurious cold dinner; and wine, music, and dancing on the green, steal one day from the plodding cares, or more insupportable languor of mortals. The simple rustics around are admitted, in due place and order, to this rural banquet; and all nature wears

the countenance of joy and gladness. Where the Tweed forms the boundary between England and Scotland, the English gentlemen and ladies cross the river in boats to attend the annual feast of their Scottish neighbours; and the Scottish ladies and gentlemen, in like manner, pay due respect, on similar occasions, to their neighbours in England. How different this humane and happy intercourse from the meetings of the Scots and English in former times, whether accidental, or for the express purpose of settling disputes!"

A little farther, and we are again reminded of the Company's dominion by the crows'-nests, as a sailor would call them, erected on tall piles on the bank, commanding a view of a long shallow curve of the river. There is one on each side, and a man stationed in each looking attentively down the stream. Their duty is to watch for the approach of fish and give immediate notice to the party above by shouts. If their watch be as keen as their voices are loud, but few fish can escape; for before I was a furlong away they both broke out with an outcry that would have done credit to a brazen throat. I wonder it did not frighten the salmon back to the sea. The men at the shiel heard it, and ran hastily to their boats.

Now the trees come down to the river and shade the path, now they recede and give place to the meadows, and here and there on the slopes a private residence looks pleasantly forth upon the landscape. Then we see the Union Chain Bridge, which Captain Brown built in 1820, one of the first structures of the kind in the kingdom. Above this the river makes a bold curve round a wooded hill, and we must go up the road a little way and take the footpath which forms the string

to the bow, and following this we soon come in sight o "Norham's castled steep," an imposing object amid a lovely landscape. We can beguile the intervening way with recollections from the first canto of *Marmion*. Horncliff Hill gives us a wide view over the Merse, reminds us of the "plump of spears," described by the warder, who—

> "Low humming, as he paced along,
> Some ancient border gathering song;"

looked forth from the tower to which our steps are leading us.

From Berwick to the Castle, following the windings of the river must be nine miles, so I was glad on arrival to sit down and rest on a sunshiny knoll, and take a quiet look at the ruin. There is but little left besides the great keep built of red sandstone, square and massive, weatherworn and honeycombed; but hardly picturesque. The height is seventy feet; you can see the well of the stair, but the stair itself is gone, pulled down, as is said, because a young man once fell from it and was killed when attempting to climb to the top. It is a mere shell now, with heavy-vaulted chambers below which are used as stable and cow-stall, whereby exploration is rendered uninviting. Of the "darksome towers," the great hall and other buildings nothing remains except fragments of old masonry peeping here and there from a parallelogram of hillocks. And outside of these a deep green hollow shows the course of the moat, crossed by a bridge to the arched gateway in the keep. Two of the outer gateways remain, and while strolling about in search of points of view, you will perhaps find one of the best to be outside the arch at the lower corner, looking back

at the ruin. A castellated lodge stands near the road, and a farmhouse on the edge of the green; but, judging from my experience, you may wander where you like unquestioned.

The hill itself is of considerable height, precipitous towards the river, and thickly overgrown with trees almost to the summit. Wood is abundant in the landscape, and your eye roves with pleasure along the vale through which the Tweed flows in shining curves. And with the charm of natural beauty we have teeming historical associations. Below us to the west lies the village of Norham, once Ubbanford. There it was, if tradition may be trusted, that the Culdees, the missionaries from Iona, first preached the Gospel in Northumberland: there Aidan, the first Bishop of Lindisfarne, died. There died Gospatrick, William the Conqueror's first Earl of Northumberland. Beyond, crowning the height on the Scottish side stands Lady-kirk, a Gothic edifice built by James IV. in honour of the Virgin who had saved him from a flood, while leading his troops across the Tweed. And here under the shadow of the huge keep, we may remember that Ralph Flambord, Bishop of Durham, built a fortress in 1121, for in those days bishops took a lively interest in things temporal and warlike; and that the place was taken by the Scots and retaken by the English two or three times in every century afterwards until its final ruin. The bishops spared not to restore and strengthen it after the assaults as long as the sword and not the Word was their weightiest argument. King John came sundry times to Norham, and once laid siege to it. Here was held the meeting of Scottish nobility and clergy which recognised Edward I. as Lord Paramount of Scotland. And here, two centuries later, came

James IV., on his way to Flodden, and crossing the river at a place named by a traitor, so hotly did he press the siege and batter the walls with cannon, among which as is said was Mons Meg, the big gun now at Edinburgh Castle, that at the end of six days the garrison capitulated. The traitor got his reward, as the ballad tells:—

"So, when the Scots the walls had won,
And rifled every nook and place,
The traitor came to the King anon,
But for reward met with disgrace.

Therefore for this thy traitrous trick,
Thou shalt be tried in a trice;
'Ho, hangman!' quoth the King, 'be quick,
The groom shall have no better place.'"

"It were a wonderful processe," says old Leland, "to declare what mischefes came by hungre and asseges by the space of eleven yeres in Northumbreland; for the Scottes became so proude after they got Berwick, that they nothing esteemid the Englischmen."

And when we tire of fact we may while reclining on our grassy couch give ourselves up to fiction, and let fancy restore and repeople the crumbling tower. We may hear the warder's shout; see the drawbridge lowered, the portcullis raised, and Marmion ride in with his troop the while "two pursuivants, whom tabarts deck," recite his titles. We witness the feast, and listen to the proud knight's discourse, a passage of tongue-fence, with his host Sir Hugh the Heron, and the harper's rude and roystering song, and the narrative of Friar John's qualifications. We see that mysterious palmer enter with stately stride: anon the high-spiced

cup is brought in and drained; the "merry wassel roar" ceases, and nought is heard—

> "But the slow footstep of the guard,
> Pacing his sober round."

But while I am dreaming the sun has mounted up to noon; so departing by the lower arch I turn for a farewell look at the ancient pile, and then pace down the hill to Norham; a village of one long wide street, with a green and an old cross midway, and near the green a large and handsome church dedicated to St. Cuthbert: the tower is massive and cathedral-like, zigzag mouldings ornament the round arches, and stained glass adorns the principal window. And here, as at Holy Island the tombs and gravestones exhibit touches of magnificence; yet the whole aspect of the churchyard is appropriate. For this the village is indebted to a good man, the late Doctor Gilly, who was vicar here for twenty-four years, whose name many a one will long revere for his earnest and thoughtful writings concerning the Waldenses. He held that a churchyard should be a place to which a villager would willingly resort for a contemplative stroll, and his ameliorations have not yet fallen into neglect.

The village itself though wide and open is somewhat bleak of aspect, even in summer. But its environment is good; as seen from the green the old ruin is a picturesque object: there is a pleasant walk by the river side; and boat-races are held "open to all the Tweed."

Where whisky is the popular drink it is not easy to get beer as many a tourist knows. Only in rare instances is draught beer available: you must have a bottle or none: and Norham, as I proved while seeking

a dinner, is not far enough from the Tweed for the prevalence of English custom.

We can entertain ourselves while at dinner with a glance at the olden time. When Æneas Sylvius came in 1448, journeying as legate to Scotland, he arrived, says the chronicle, about sunset at a large village near a river, where "he alighted at a countryman's house, and sup'd with the Curate of the place and his host. The table was plentifully furnished with pottage, hens, and geese; but nothing of either wine or bread appear'd. All the men and women of the town flock'd in as to some strange sight: and, as our countrymen used to admire the Æthiopians or Indians, so these people star'd at Æneas, asking the Curate, what countryman he was? what his errand could be? and whether he were a Christian or no? But Æneas being aware of the scarcity he would meet with on this road, was accommodated by a Monastery with a rundlet of red wine and some loaves of bread. When these were brought to the table, they were more astonish'd than before, having never seen either wine or white bread. Big-belly'd women, with their husbands, came to the table side, and handling the bread, and smelling to the wine, beg'd a taste: so that there was no avoiding the dealing of the whole amongst them. After they had sate at supper till two hours within night, the Curate and the Landlord (with the children and all the men) left Æneas, and rub'd off in haste. They said, they were going to shelter themselves in a certain tower, at a good distance, for fear of the Scots, who at low water used to cross the river in the night, and fall a-plundering. They would by no means be persuaded to take Æneas along with them, though he very importunately entreated them to do it. Neither

carry'd they off any of the women, though several of them, both wives and maids, were very handsom; for they believe the enemy will not harm them; not looking upon whoredom as any ill thing. Thus Æneas was left alone (with only two Servants and a Guide) amongst a hundred women, who sitting in a ring, with a fire in the middle of 'em, spent the night sleepless, in dressing of hemp, and chatting with the Interpreter. When the night was well advanc'd, they had a mighty noise of dogs barking and geese gagling; whereupon the women slipt off several ways, the guide run away, and all was in such a confusion as if the enemy had been upon 'em. But Æneas thought it his wisest course to keep close in his Bedchamber (which was a Stable), and there to await the issue; lest, running out, and being unacquainted with the country, he should be rob'd by the first man he met. Presently both the women and the guide return, acquainting them that all was well, and that they were Friends (and no Enemies) that were arriv'd."

The repast over I walked to the bridge, crossed the river and up the hill to Ladykirk. Remarkably picturesque is the view of the building as you approach from the road, with its walls and buttresses, and finials, and conical roof mantled with ivy, and a small tree growing up from the apex. The choir is cut off from the rest by a wall and is now used as a schoolroom, and the master who was busy with his numerous flock of boys and girls, sent a bare-footed urchin to summon the woman who kept the key. If the Scottish iconoclasts spared the Ladykirk, they did not spare the interior decorations; and it is with a feeling of surprise if not of disappointment, that you see graceful Gothic arches, and groined coves, and lancet windows, so

devoid of ornament. The seats and fittings are rude in their simplicity. However, as one of the villagers said, "if the preachin''s good, the place is no so much to think o';" but he and most of the others preferred going to chapel at Corndean or Norham.

Coming out on the brow above the bridge on your return, you will think the trouble of the ascent well repaid by the view, apart from the sight of the kirk. Hill-slopes, wood and water, and fields wherein good husbandry and Nature's bounty are alike manifest, combine to satisfy the eye. Mr. Newte was right in his surmise that the banks of the Tweed would some day be as pleasant as those of the Thames.

The toll-house at the bridge end presents you with another characteristic of Scotland: it sells beer and whisky. The keeper from whom I asked information concerning the road to Flodden, told me "He knew it fine."

I recrossed the bridge and pursued the westerly route, and came soon upon the bank of the river, where crag, and a bosky glen, enlivened by a burn and islets make a romantic scene. After crossing the glen I struck away across fields for Twizell bridge, and soon lost sight of the stream. There was the long slope of the vale to mount; at the top I came to another of the dismal farm-places, and dirty withal, the ground in front of the houses varnished with slops and bestrewn with rubbish, and looking as if it never had been smooth. The women, at least the two or three whom I saw and spoke to, match the scene, and seem to have learnt no more than the merest rudiments of cleanliness and tidiness. They might learn something, if they would, from the grand wide prospect they enjoy. I wanted to talk to the group of little children who were at play; but they were shy as fawns, and

dispersed in alarm as they saw me approach holding out my hand. Young Hottentots could hardly betray more uneasiness at their first sight of a white man.

Another half-hour and I had travelled the high road to Twizell bridge, and there flows the Till dark and slow beneath the great arch, and the neighbourhood looks forest-like with abundance of trees, and we linger not unwillingly. Though the parapet has been repaired, that bridge is the same over which the English army marched to get between the Scots and the Tweed on the eve of the Battle of Flodden. As the minstrel describes:—

"Even so it was. From Flodden ridge
The Scots beheld the English host
Leave Barmore-wood, their evening post,
And heedful watch'd them as they cross'd
The Till by Twizell-bridge.
High sight it is, and haughty, while
They dive into the deep defile;
Beneath the cavern'd cliff they fall,
Beneath the castle's airy wall.
By rock, by oak, by hawthorn tree,
Troop after troop are disappearing,
Troop after troop their banners rearing
Upon the eastern bank you see.
Still pouring down the rocky den,
Where flows the sullen Till,
And, rising from the dim wood-glen,
Standards on standards, men on men,
In slow succession still,
And sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
And pressing on, in ceaseless march,
To gain the opposing hill."

Go down into the hollow and you may take a draught at St. Helen's Well, the same from which many a thirsty bowman drank as the columns marched past, still flowing near the brink of the stream. Eastwards rises the tall cliff crowned by "the castle"—a great house begun years ago by one of the Blakes

and never finished, looking melancholy with its round towers, and weather-stained wall touched here and there with vegetation, and gaping windows. The river makes a bend here and flows away under the cliff and between high wooded banks to join the Tweed; and wishing to see the confluence and Tillmouth Chapel, I turned into the narrow valley—almost a glen—and followed the margin of the stream. It is a lonely place, darkened by overhanging branches, swampy here and there, and overgrown by dock leaves, or encumbered with brambles; yet refreshing in its quiet and sylvan beauty. The river abounds with trout, and in one place shaking off its sullenness makes a lively rapid, with a cheerful noise for the ear, and wreaths of foam for the eye. But the sluggish habit prevails, and we see the force of the popular rhyme:—

"Tweed said to Till,
'What gars ye rin sae still?'
Till said to Tweed,
'Though ye' rin wi' speed
And I rin slaw,
Yet where ye drown ae man
I drown twa!'"

High above the tree-tops appear the lofty arches of the railway-bridge crossing the valley with a fine effect. A little farther, and with a gentle curve by the side of a great wheatfield, the Till mingles its waters with the Tweed. We have not yet got beyond the salmon-fishers, for I saw a party busy with their boat. Towards the middle of the field stands a small plain building—Tillmouth Chapel; not the relic of antiquity that you hoped to see; not the cell to which St. Cuthbert floated in his stone coffin down the Tweed from Melrose, in one of his frequent migrations ere he found a final resting-place at Durham; not the cell to which as we

read in *Marmion*, Fitz-Eustace conducted Clare after the battle. The saint's coffin was once to be seen here, broken in two; but not now; and as for the chapel, it is not easy to comprehend why it was built, for it is bare and empty as a boat-house. So, if your half hour's walk from the bridge is not repaid by hoary ruins, it is by the green vistas of the course of the Till.

Instead of going back to the gate, it is possible to scramble up the bank and through the bushes, and thus make a short cut to the road. Then at the lodge of Tillmouth Park we turn into a cross-road, which bordered in places with noble beeches, leads us to the south across a cultivated country of large fields for four or five miles till we strike the high-road for Wooler. Then a furlong to the right, and we come to the *Blue Bell*, a hostelry well known in these parts, and considering that we have walked twenty miles or more altogether, and that it is eight in the evening, here will we tarry for the night.

The landlady feared she could not make me comfortable, for the house was all in confusion with bricks and mortar and restorations. However she would do her best: and that was satisfactory. Her tea and broiled mutton were alike excellent, and the reason why, as she told me was, that she wouldn't buy bad things: she got all her groceries direct from Newcastle. The *Blue Bell* had a character worth maintaining; and could entertain good company. The Berwickshire Naturalists' Field Club, once held a meeting there.

The night drew on showery and chilly, and I found it very comfortable sitting by the kitchen fire, chatting with the landlord who beguiled the time with a quiet pipe and a glass of ale. He knew Flodden well, and would accompany me thither if it were not that the

workpeople must be looked after, and he could not get away. But for knowledge of the ground there was nobody like the gamekeeper; he was the man for a stranger, but unluckily he had gone that day to Berwick. However, some way would perhaps be found in the morning.

The sound of heavy rain when I woke was not encouraging, and still less so the sight of leaden clouds at breakfast-time. However, by the time I was ready to start a watery gleam of sunshine appeared, and the rain broke into showers: so a boy having been found who knew the ground, I set off for Flodden, about two miles distant.

We cross fields which form part of the estates of the Marquis of Waterford, who inhabits Ford Castle for a few weeks in the year, and who, as the boy says, "improves his land fine." Presently, coming to the top of a rise, we see the ridge of Flodden, a long hill with a gradual slope to the north, one extremity marked by a clump of firs, the other by a straggling wood. Those firs mark the site of the King's Chair, a group of rocks on which King James sat to watch Lord Surrey's movements. Then the country was bare and open; now the fields and enclosures spread as far as eye can see, and encroach high up on Flodden itself; and the height crowned by the straggling wood is now diminished by a wide stone quarry, which, year by year, makes fresh gaps among the trees.

There are none of those signs of age about the fields, roads, and farm-buildings which we notice in the southern counties. To a stranger the aspect is that of a country recently settled; but let reclamation of the waste go on at the same rate as hitherto, and in

fifty years more, the bare slope will look as warm and fertile as the lands near the Tweed; and the antiquary will find it more difficult than ever to identify the battle-field.

We passed Blinkbonny farm; near it was a small brook, which I thought might be the Blinkbonny burn, and questioned the boy thereupon; but he had never heard that the burn had a name, he only knew that it ran for three days and three nights with blood after the battle. Neither had he heard of that eagerly patriotic Northumbrian, who, some years ago, came all the way from America to Flodden, with his infant son, for the sole purpose of christening the child in Blinkbonny. Better to him was that crystal brook than all the waters of Niagara.

I waded through the rank wet grass to the top of the hill above the quarry. It commands a good view of the ground, and if your imagination be lively you may animate the ridge with the Scottish camp and army, and the fields below with the advancing divisions of the English host. On they come, in two great masses, named in the old speech the foreward and rearward, each having wings and a centre. The Admiral Lord Howard led the foreward, with his own troop of mariners, distinguished by dun-coloured armour, and with him came Clifford, "the Shepherd Lord," and Conyers and Lumley, and other noble chiefs, and the men of Durham, under the banner of St. Cuthbert, with bills and bows, and heavy mallets, and Tunstall, the Undefiled; and Cholmley, with their retainers from Yorkshire. The rearward, which marches not behind, but abreast of the other, is commanded by Lord Surrey, a resolute leader still, though verging in years on threescore and ten; and around

him are the good Lord Scrope with his dalesmen, and Lord Dacre, with squadrons of horse; and Stanley, with bows and bills from Lancashire and Cheshire; and there march the bowmen of Kendal, marked by red crosses on their white coats; and many of the stalwart tenantry of Cumberland and Westmoreland, formidable in the use of the deadly bill. And Heron is there with his border rovers, alike ready to fight and to steal; and many a knight and squire burning to win renown; and between the divisions, laboriously dragged by beasts of burden, appear the ponderous cannon and bands of gunners.

Meanwhile King James sets fire to his tents, abandons his camp, and draws off along the height to Branxton hill:—now recognisable by the clump of fir-trees on its summit. The smoke rolls down upon the field, the artillery opens fire, and late in the afternoon the battle begins, and the English right is repulsed by Huntly and Home. The king dismounts, hot with excitement, he will fight with the rest, and his proudest chiefs throng around him to shield his person and share his danger. Then as the smoke floats away upon the southerly breeze, the spectators see how—

> "Wide raged the battle on the plain;
> Spears shook, and falchions flash'd amain;
> Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;
> Crests rosé, and stoop'd, and rose again,
> Wild and disorderly."

The battle continues; neither side will yield; is England to be beaten? Loud sounds the cry, and Stanley rushes to the charge; the shades of evening fall, and still the gallant band maintain their ground around their monarch, defying all attempts—

> "To break the Scottish circle deep,
> That fought around their King.

But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though billmen ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood
The instant that he fell."

But all in vain, for before midnight—

"Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band,
Disorder'd, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land."

On the spot, and recalling the circumstances of the fatal day, the conclusion seems obvious that to cut their way through the enemy, and regain their native land was the purpose of the Scots, and had the English archers been less skilful, or the billmen less resolute, the movement would have succeeded. But it was a terrible day for Scotland; the pride of her kingdom perished, and for many a long year the name of Flodden was to her a cause of weeping and desolation. And this, fought on the 9th of September, 1513, was the last great pitched battle between the two nations. We may take our leave with a stanza from Leyden's spirited ode:

"Alas! that Scottish maid should sing
The combat where her lover fell!
That Scottish bard should wake the string,
The triumph of our foes to tell!
Yet Teviot's sons, with high disdain,
Have kindled at the thrilling strain
That mourn'd their martial fathers' bier;
And at the sacred font the priest
Through ages left the master-hand unblest,
To urge, with keener aim, the blood-encrusted spear."

In the distance, on the farther side of Tweed, we

can see Home castle, and below us, on the right, the village of Etal, a model village, and Ford castle, on a slope, pleasantly sprinkled by wood. The boy, while I am looking at it through my telescope, tells me that the battle was very bloody; and that the king fled to Ford, and was chased thence by the English, who cut off his head in a field near the road as you go to Twizell, and set up the stone which is still to be seen to mark the place. He thinks it fortunate that the Scots did not beat; "because if they had beat, we should all be speaking Scotch, all the way to London."

I had planned to walk along the ridge to its western extremity, but the weather was treacherous, and by the time my survey from the top of the quarry was complete, heavy rain was falling. A hill-top is not inviting when gusty showers sweep across, I had therefore to seek the foot. On the way down, the boy showed me a spring, which he said was the King's well; the king had drunk from it during the battle. The water is excellent. The well which Scott represents as Sybil Grey's is now inclosed within a farm-yard, and has lost all the charm it possessed when bubbling from the lone hillock on the heath.

Under the circumstances, it seemed best to direct my steps to the railway station at Cornhill, some six miles distant. I made the boy happy by a piece of silver; and he for a final touch of service instructed me as to the way. It would lead me, he said, past the priest's house at Branxton. In this use of the term priest to signify clergyman, he showed himself a true rustic Northumbrian.

CHAPTER XXI.

Branxton—Pallinsburn—Cornhill—Coldstream—Putting-off the Appetite—Running away from the Rain—Wark—Birgham—Kelso—The Teviot—The Eildons—Melrose—The Abbey—A Captious Guardian—Sublime Architecture: Ridiculous Epitaph—Fast-day Kale—Darnick—Abbotsford—The Visitors' Room—Sir Walter's Study—His Speak-a-bit—Portraits—Past and Present—Choosing a Site—Teeming Associations—Mortality—Armoury and Hall—Up the Eildons—The Glorious Border-land—Witchcraft—King Arthur—Thomas the Rhymer—A Twilight Descent—An American Quaker—Talking and Travelling—The Tweed by Moonlight.

HEDGEROWS and agreeable prospects salute your eye as you descend the lane to Branxton, where the "priest's house," as may be seen in passing, enjoys a cheerful outlook. I should have liked a talk with the Rev. Mr. Jones, and a sight of his relics, picked up on the battle-field; but did not feel warranted to attempt an intrusion. The village, which lies a little below the vicarage, is a primitive-looking little place, with a church to match. Of things noticeable there are the pillars of the chancel arch, older than the Conquest; a place in the churchyard where a deposit of bones of men and horses was once found; and in the village the house in which Percival Stockdale was born; a poor little habitation. And we may remember that Pallinsburn, a hamlet not far off, is said to commemorate Paulinus and his numerous baptisms.

By lane and fieldpath I came at length to the high-road, and did not fail to mount the dyke to look for

the big stone; but as I afterwards heard it stands a mile away to the east, and I could not discern it. Coming presently to Cornhill, I thought it advisable to run away from the rain, and had time before the train arrived to dine, and walk down to the bridge, and look at Coldstream, the town where General Monk raised the regiment which first introduced the Coldstreams into the British Army. A fragment yet remains of the Cistercian Abbey, in which Marmion is described as having passed the night before the battle; and the romance mingles curiously with local history, for at the north end of the bridge many a hasty couple have been joined in wedlock.

The inn at Cornhill is a house of call for carters. In the room where I dried myself at the fire, sat a dozen or more of the sturdy rustics eating what seemed to me but a poor dinner—bread and beer. Every four men had a loaf in a bag; and every man taking his quarter, they sat pulling off mouthfuls, and drinking, what they called, their "sup o' ale." I remarked that hard-working-men needed a better dinner than that. But as one said, in reply to my remark: "It isn't wur dinner; 'tis just something to put off wur appetite till we get home wi' the cairts." Half an hour's halt sufficed, during which as the beer went round they said, "lap it up;" and then every man to his carts, and the long train that had been waiting in the road, started for the northern side of the river. In this part of the country it is thought better to send four horses with four carts than with one wagon.

The train arrives, and away we go still up the vale of Tweed. Past Wark, where once stood a proud castle, of which history has written a few grim pages, siege and storm prominent, as in all these Border

strongholds. Walter L'Espec—he who founded Rievaulx Abbey, once owned it; and when the garrison had held out till they were eating horseflesh, sent the abbot to make terms with the Scots. It was there that the incident befell in which originated the Order of the Garter. Past Birgham, said to be the dirtiest village in the kingdom, and of ill-repute in another sense; for it was there that the commission sat which gave up Scotland to Edward. Hence the local proverb, "Go to Birgham and buy bickers."

Now it is Scottish land on both sides of us; and soon we get a glimpse of Kelso, and cross the Teviot, which there flows into the Tweed, charged with a thousand associations of pleasant Teviotdale. A little farther, and we pass the ruin of Roxburgh Castle, where James the Second was killed by the bursting of a cannon; then Ednam, where the author of The Seasons was born; and now we have left the rain behind, and in the distance before us the Eildon Hills rear their triple summit boldly aloft; and looking northwards, we catch a sight of Smailholm tower; anon, Newtown Station reminds us that Dryburgh is near. Then the great hill seems to change its position as the line makes a curve round its base, and ere we have ceased to admire its bold proportions, the train stops at Melrose.

I walked forthwith to the famous Abbey, and saw it under all the charm of sunshine and blue sky; yet could not help feeling that its effect was somewhat diminished by nearness to the town. Nevertheless, it is a glorious ruin; surprising you by the beauty and perfection of its ornaments, even though prepared by reading for something extraordinary. One might almost believe that to compensate the mischief of the

English invaders of five hundred years ago, Time and weather had conspired to preserve these masterworks of the mediæval chisel in all their original excellence. Founded by David the First in 1136, the Abbey was first inhabited by monks from Rievaulx. If it grieved them to quit their sequestered dale, they must have rejoiced in the goodly habitation assigned to them, where column and aisle, and arch and cloister feasted their eyes and hearts with the most exquisite graces of architecture. He must be phlegmatic indeed, who, beholding the great length of the nave, more than two hundred and fifty feet, the rows of clustering pillars, the perspective of the aisles, and all the wondrous conceits and devices of those old workmen, feels no emotion of something more than admiration.

The place is well preserved, and the turf within is as smooth as in a college quadrangle, and while pacing up and down, we can slide back to the time when—

> "The darken'd roof rose high aloof,
> On pillars lofty, light, and small.
> The keystone that lock'd each ribb'd aisle
> Was a fleur-de-lis or a quatre-feuille;
> The corbels were carved, grotesque and grim,
> And the pillars with cluster'd shafts so trim,
> With base and capital flourish'd around,
> Seemed bundles of lances which garlands had bound."

There are times when our fulness of satisfaction is impaired by words; and to one not a professed antiquary or architect, there is little edification in a catalogue of mutilated fragments. But the old man who shows the ruin, was unwilling to believe that I would spare him the trouble of explanation; and misapprehending my motive, he grew angry, and threatened to fetch two men and have me carried out. However, I soon convinced him I was not dangerous; and then he

unlocked the door of the cloisters, and opened the way to the tower and the door to the cemetery, and went on with his mowing, while I sauntered to and fro, and climbed the ancient stairs, and peeped from dilapidated windows, on a landscape which greets the eye with plenty and and loveliness.

The view of the outside from the cemetery is not less admirable than the inside, and you look at it influenced by the impression of the surrounding scenery; that is, if you can forget the town. The great arched entrance, with its mouldings, carvings, niches, and statues will hold you long in loving contemplation.

While walking about seeking the best point of view, an epitaph on one of the gravestones changed the current of my thought so completely, that I am tempted, gracious reader, to try its effect on you. It relates to an aged man, buried in 1849, who was formerly the guardian of the ruin, and runs thus :—

> The precious dust beneath this stone
> Once show'd that ancient pile;
> And form'd an Israelite indeed,
> In whom there was no guile.

After that, how shall we bring ourselves into fitting mood to muse on what befell when the Lady of Branksome's message came at midnight to demand the magic volume held in the buried wizard's hand? We must turn to a livelier theme :—

> "O, the monks of Melrose made gude kale,
> On Fridays when they fasted;
> They wanted neither beef nor ale,
> As long as their neighbours' lasted."

From Melrose to Abbotsford is nearly an hour's walk, still up the vale of Tweed, and in view of the cheerful hill-slopes that look down on the stream,

while the "Eildon Three" rise grandly on the left. The road passes through Darnick, a village pleasantly situate, where you may see an ancient tower, and where dwells Currie, one of Scotland's famous sculptors. A little farther, and the road traverses open fields, where the side of the vale sweeping down from the Eildons, pauses, so to speak, on a level, before finishing its descent with gentle slope to the river. On the farther bank, northwards, the ground presses on the stream in bolder forms, thickly shaded by woods, among which the bright green of the pastures looks the brighter; a prospect cheerful to behold. Presently, our road passes between plantations that have the charm of natural wood; rising boldly on one side, on the other, falling away in masses to the Tweed: here we come to a wall, where a direction-board bids us open a door and enter. Before obeying, I went on to look at the main entrance, and saw masons building a new lodge, and on the lintel of the door they had carved in raised letters, IN THE LORD IS MY HOPE: a motto which circumstances seem to render especially appropriate.

Then coming back to the door, a few paces along the inclosed path upon which it opened, brought me within sight of the house of Abbotsford, in all the picturesque medley which the engraver's skill has made familiar to us as a household word; and for a few minutes I stood realising the pleasure of actual recognition. Then the path descends steps between high walls to the basement of the house, and presently a turn shows us flower-gardens and greenhouses, and the door of the visitors' room. There was no one in the room: I knocked at the inner door; no answer, not a sound, the place seemed deserted. I looked at the

curiosities in the room, waited fifteen minutes and knocked again, still no answer. I rang a large brazen bell that stood on a shelf; and sat down to the visitors' book. The number of American names inscribed therein was very remarkable; testifying to the respect and admiration in which Scott's name is held in the United States. Have they not however Washington Irving's graceful story of his visit to Abbotsford to inspire them? Another ten minutes passed: then a key turned in the lock, and there entered an ancient serving-man, one of the relics of the place, who remembers the founder of Abbotsford. He had been to get his tea, he said, and had heard none of my signals.

He led the way at once up a stone-stair to the study, and in a tone of mingled affection and reverence began to speak of "Sir Walter," and point to the table at which the prince of story-tellers used to write, and the large comfortable chair in which he used to sit. There are books, mostly of reference on the shelves; a few pictures, shields, and old claymores hanging on the walls, and sundry antique cabinets, by all of which the room is fitly furnished. But as if by fascination your eye is continually drawn away from the sides to the chair and table in the centre: as if you expected to see the former occupant in his familiar seat. And remembering the amount and quality of the work accomplished within this room, you will perhaps think it more interesting than any other in the house.

Then opening a door in one corner, leading into the turret, the old man says, "Sir Walter used to call this his speak-a-bit." It is a small light closet, and a convenient place for a word or two in private: and now on stepping in you see a glass-case containing the yeomanry

uniform, the Highland costume, and the last clothes worn by the great minstrel.

We pass into the library, a room sixty feet in length, with a heavy ceiling which impairs the effect of handsome divisions of books, and the ornamental objects. A portrait of the eldest son in hussar uniform fills the panel over the fireplace, which you will examine with the more interest having in mind the incidents of the young man's life, and the letters written to him by his father.

The cheerfulness and grace of the drawing-room are the more apparent by contrast with the library. The old man tells his tale diligently, and misses nothing; but very willingly yields to my wish that he will tell me only what I ask him, and that is to name the family portraits and some of the rarities. Among the former he pointed out a youthful maiden—Mrs. Lockhart in her girlhood; another was Anne Scott; another, the younger son; another, the great grandfather of the "amber beard;" besides likenesses of the minstrel himself in stone, marble and canvas; the "sic sedebat," showing us what manner of man he was.

While looking from the windows upon well-kept grounds, you will hardly realise the description of the place as it appeared fifty years ago; wild heathy land, almost in a state of nature; a miserable little farm-house, with a kail-yard on one side and a noisome pond on the other. However, in the eyes of Scott it possessed a charm; and in 1811 having a good income in view, and a pen of magic power in hand, he set about realising the object of his ambition—the dignity of a Tweedside laird. Why this particular spot was chosen is explained in a passage in the *Life* by Lockhart: "I have often heard him tell," he writes, "that

when travelling in his boyhood with his father from Selkirk to Melrose, the old man suddenly desired the carriage to halt at the foot of an eminence, and said, 'We must get out here, Walter, and see a thing quite in your line.' His father then conducted him to a rude stone on the edge of an acclivity about half a mile above the Tweed at Abbotsford, which marks the spot—

> "Where gallant Cessford's life-blood dear
> Reek'd on dark Elliott's border spear."

This was the conclusion of the Battle of Melrose, fought in 1526, between the Earls of Angus and Home, and the two chiefs of the race of Kerr, on the one side, and Buccleuch and his clan on the other, in sight of the young King James V., the possession of whose person was the object of the contest."

And there was other local interest: a Roman road traceable from the Eildons to the adjacent ford; the Catrail, that ancient British dyke, visible in places; the Castle of Glendinning beyond the Tweed, and the legendary scenes—that cheerful view which we saw from the fields—afterwards portrayed in *The Monastery;* there flows Allan Water; there the Leader; there Langlee woods shelter the way to the Fairy Dean; there the fairy stones were found in the shallows; and it was there that the laird heard—

> "O the broom, and the bonny broom,
> And the broom o' the Cowdenknowes!
> And aye sae sweet the lassie sang
> I'the bought, milking the ewes."

And so Scott set to work and built and drained and planted, and realised his ambition to the full.

But in the prospect without as well as in the portraits within one sees touching memorials. The Tweedside

laird, with sons and daughters, has passed away, and not one of his lineage remains. Not one is left; and, as if to make the lesson the more impressive to those who set their heart on founding a family, the same mortality has fallen upon the grandchildren. Fresh bereavements have brought mourning to Abbotsford since my visit, and imparted an impressive significance to the motto which I read on the lintel of the lodge.

Rob Roy's gun, Claverhouse's pistol, Wishart's mask, and Hofer's blunderbuss, were what I cared most to see in the armoury. Stern and earnest are their associations. In the entrance hall we see carved oak walls dark with age from old Dunfermline, a floor of Hebridean marble, and swords and spears and suits of armour wherewith doughty deeds were wrought in the days of romance. And all along the cornice appear the shields of the Wardens of the Marches, and the writing—**These be the Coat Armories of the Clanns, and the chief men of name wha keepit the Marches of Scotland in the auld tyme for the Kynge. Trewe men war they in their tyme; and in their defence, God them defendyt.**

Here our survey ends, and we return to the little room in the basement, where the old man takes his fee with the same civility that he has manifested throughout. Some visitors, he says, ask to see the whole house, and walk in the grounds; but for that, special permission must be obtained from Mr. Hope Scott. The most however appreciate the present favour, and are fully satisfied with what is shown.

It was so bright an evening and the Eildons looked so pleasant in the sunlight, that I yielded to the inclination to mount to the top of the highest, and turned off from the road at Darnick on the way back to Melrose. There were a few tiresome ups and downs

and swampy patches to encounter at first, and then a long and steady climb. It proved to be steeper and longer than I had anticipated, judging by appearances from the distance, and whether I should get to the top or not before sunset became a question. Here and there a patch of screes added to the difficulty, however, I persevered and came panting to the summit, a height of 1381 feet, with a quarter of an hour to spare.

Far and wide lay the Border-land: the glorious Border-land; birthplace and home of poets, historians, statesmen, and warriors; now all a-glow with the golden beams. A vast panorama, stretching from Ettrick Forest and Yarrow to Cheviot, and Flodden, and Lammermuir, farms and woods, parks and meadows outspread in broad undulations, and here and there a graceful peak such as the Black Hill of Cowdenknowes, or massive ridge rising above the rest, inspiring a sentiment of the mountains. Every height stands up in brighter relief by contrast with the dark broadening shadows in their rear; twinkling spots reveal the places of human habitation which but for that golden speck would be hardly discoverable; the Tweed in graceful curves gleams for miles along the vale; and Melrose reposes among trees where plain and hillfoot meet. "I can stand on the Eildon Hill," said Scott, "and point out forty-three places famous in war and verse."

And the hill itself has a history: on this central summit the Romans are said to have had a look-out station. What magnificent prospects for the sentries! And legends tell that Michael Scott, the mighty magician, having to keep a troublesome fiend in constant work set him first to build the dam across the Tweed which is still to be seen at Kelso, next to

remodel Eildon. The command was speedily obeyed, and for one peak there appeared three, and the familiar was only baffled at last by an order to twist ropes out of sea-sand. Another version represents Michael himself as the perpetrator: when attempting to carry away the hill on a spade, it fell and broke into three. What says the aged monk to Deloraine down there in that abbey concerning the Wizard?

> "Some of his skill he taught to me;
> And, warrior, I could say to thee
> The words that cleft Eildon hills in three,
> And bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone."

And that which befell at the hill of Richmond in Yorkshire, and in other places of King Arthur's dominion, has also befallen here. Once upon a time, as the story runs, an ancient man clad in strange fashion walked up the hill, followed by a roystering borderer, who not content with getting good red gold in exchange for his horses, wished to moisten his bargain with whisky. They come to a cave in the hillside: the venerable stranger repeats a warning against cowardice, and of the fearful sights within; but the chapman is resolute and will on. Then entering the hill they see long ranges of stables, a coal-black steed in every stall, and a knight in black armour and a drawn sword in his hand lying by every horse, but all silent and motionless as statues. A few torches shed uncertain light, and show at the farther end of the great cavern a table with a sword and a horn lying thereon.

Then spake Thomas the Rhymer, that ancient man, declaring that he who should have the courage to sound the horn and draw the sword should be king over all

Britain. The chapman would fain have retreated: he came for whisky not magic; and he knew not which to take first though everything depended thereon. He took the bugle; blew a timorous blast; but the echoes rolled as thunder, horses and knights started to life, he thought to seize the sword to defend himself when a furious wind drove him from the cave, while a voice uttered—

> "Wo to the coward that ever he was born
> Who did not draw the sword before he blew the horn."

The luckless wight was hurled away down the stony slope, and only lived long enough to relate the adventure to the shepherds who found him lying next morning at the foot of the hill.

But older than the most ancient legend is the history which Mr. Robert Chambers finds written on the hills themselves, as set forth in his interesting work *Ancient Sea-Margins*. He shows that eight parallel lines or terraces are traceable along the north-western front of the Eildons, beginning at an elevation of 542 feet, and occuring at unequal intervals up to within fifty feet of the summit; and these terraces he shows to be correspondent with similar lines or levels on the hills of the other side of the vale, each line being, as he supposes, the margin of an ancient sea.

Gradually the rays fade from the heights, to linger, as it seems, for a few moments here on the highest peak of Eildon where we sit; but the shadows creep ever upward and ere long twilight prevails on the hill-top and in the valley. I quit my turfy seat, and follow a track which with many a turn and rise and fall on the great slope, brings me down to Melrose. And in the loneliness of the summit, and this quiet walk in the

gloaming, the sense of confusion produced by the crowding incidents of the day, disappears from my mind; my heart selects its proper share, and tranquillity ensues.

"I am an American, I am;" said the only other guest in the coffee-room of the *George Inn*, as we sat loitering over our tea; as if his first nasal greeting had not betrayed him as surely as it does an Australian. In fact, residence in a colony and nasillation belong now to cause and effect. But though a young man, the American did not exhibit certain weaknesses for which his countrymen are remarkable: he did not boast that his father was a colonel in the army, or the first merchant of his city, or worth two hundred thousand dollars, or the owner of forty thousand acres up in Michigan. On the contrary, he confessed himself "a clerk in a silk-house at Philadelphia," with salary sufficient to enable him to cross the Atlantic and see Europe. Presently, as we warmed in our talk, and became somewhat confidential, he said "I am a Quaker, I am."

Good, thought I, and praised his candour, and the courage with which he used what some regard as a term of reproach.

"Well," he answered, "if a man is a Quaker, I don't see why he should hesitate to say so."

Neither do I.

He had however his weak points: he could not trust himself to use Quaker phraseology and say thee and thou, except among his own people; but in the matter of dress he did not feel called on to attire himself different from other citizens. On the other hand, there was one American weakness which he had in per-

fection: he would travel at the greatest cost, and visit the most expensive hotels.

His notion of seeing Europe was very simple: too much so, as I ventured to suggest. He had taken a trip to Paris, had visited London, journeyed thence by rail to Glasgow, had come from Edinburgh yesterday, was going on to Newcastle, and thence back to London, with perhaps a halt at York by the way. No, he had not seen Winchester, nor Plymouth, nor Salisbury, nor Edgehill, nor Warwick, nor Derbyshire, nor the Lakes. No, he felt homesick, and wanted to get on; and now that he had seen Abbotsford, and Scott's chair, and table, and habiliments, his task was accomplished, and he should be glad when the remaining ten days were past, and he could start for home.

"What *air* you smiling at?" he said, as he looked across at me.

"I can't help smiling," I answered, "at the thought of any one wanting to go back to that country."

Then he talked about the Abbey, and said he meant to go presently and see it by moonlight. After what Scott had written, it would not do to leave Melrose without a moonlight visit to the ruin. And he refused to believe that moonlight on any other abbey ruin would look as well, though perhaps there might be something in what the singer sings:—

"Oh, hae ye seen the Tweed while the moon shone bright,
And the stars gemm'd the sky wi' their siller light
If ye haena' seen it, then
Half its sweets ye canna' ken;
Oh, gae back and look again
On a shining night."

Unfortunately, when he went forth at half-past ten the

moon was hidden by clouds: to make up for the disappointment I suggested an early ascent of Eildon in the morning, and told him how to find the way easily, and he resolved on the adventure. We parted for the night with an arrangement to go together to Dryburgh.

CHAPTER XXII.

Afraid of a Hill—A Third-class Venture—Newtown—Another Quaker—Philosophy in a Ferry-boat—Sydney Smith's Remonstrance—Dryburgh Abbey—The Tombs—Inigo Jones, the Bridge-builder—American Notions of England—Neglecters of Scott—Roxburgh—Jedburgh—The Abbey—Landscape and History—Memorial Fountain—Talk about Tippling—A Hard Bargain with Providence—The Good Resurrectionist—Compensations—Songs, Men, and Manners.

AMONG the pleasant walks in the neighbourhood of Melrose, that by the side of the Tweed, where the ripples quiver with sunshine, and run with music, affords a delightful beginning for a day. Returning thence, I met the American, and prepared myself to hear his raptures over his early climb; but he only said, "Well, I was up soon enough, and went out; but the hill looked so high, I thought I wouldn't try it."

The *George Inn* charges seven and sixpence for tea, bed, breakfast, and service, which is one of the signs of an improving town, notwithstanding that a few thatched roofs are still to be seen. As we walked to the station, I told the American that I meant to travel to Newtown by third-class, and thereby amazed him not a little. Third-class! and he a citizen of Pennsylvania! The very thought was an outrage on republicanism. However, as we paced the platform, while waiting for the train, I argued the point, showing him that if only for the sake of knowing how a man feels in a third-class carriage, he ought to try the

experiment; and he yielded, seeing, moreover, that the distance was but five miles.

"Well," he said, as soon as he could speak, after taking his seat; "I didn't think third-class carriages were so respectable."

"You'll go home all the wiser," I answered. "Don't you know that we are wise people here; teachers of shrewd lessons to railway directors, which they are only too slow in learning. Come back to England twenty years hence, and you will find cushions in the third-class carriages."

A few minutes brought us to Newtown, the station for Dryburgh. Among the passengers who alighted, my companion recognised two or three of his countrymen, just come from Edinburgh; and for a while the nasal twang was triumphant in the party that took their way down to the river. The byeway is pretty; a little valley of rugged slopes, through which runs a brook, and a path to the edge of the high-wooded bank, leading past the rusty and drooping relics of the suspension bridge, which the Earl of Buchan built, and a flood washed away, and so to the ferry.

The young clerk, dropping a little to the rear, said to me in a low tone while pointing to one of his countrymen—"Do you see that one there? He's a Quaker too."

The broad shingly bed where the boat plies, shows how formidable the Tweed must appear in his swollen moods. We found him running round the stony curve with a rapid, talkative current; and in two trips the whole party were landed on the northern bank. One of the Americans was unhappy; disgusted with England and Scotland too for the matter of that, because of the Jack in office that met him at every turn. Whereupon

the ferryman, who is a philosopher in his way, retorted that there was plenty of liberty, which was more than could be said for a certain great country beyond the sea. Then I, to keep the ball going, said, "Look, ladies and gentlemen, at our cousin from America, that land where all men are born equally free and independent, who having travelled five miles this morning in a third-class carriage, is somewhat astonished at finding himself alive and well after so tremendous an experiment." A merry laugh, in which the ladies made their voices heard, greeted this banter; and I liked the young clerk from the "silk house" all the better for taking part in it, thereby showing himself to be one of the very few Americans who can take a joke. I doubt if Sydney Smith would have ventured into the same boat with two of those "drab-coloured men of Pennsylvania," to whom he once addressed a memorable remonstrance.

About a mile's walk between orchards brought us to a lodge, where a maiden took us in charge; for Dryburgh is not a place of unrestricted access. As we crossed the orchard to the ruin, my companion remarked in an undertone, that a countryman of his had told him the place was not worth seeing. But though not equal to Melrose in beauty, there is enough of the ancient abbey left to inspire a sentiment of admiration, apart from the profounder sentiment inspired by its appropriation as a burial-place. The first occupants of the site were monks from the Abbey of Alnwick; and there is something interesting in the association of this sequestered spot with that old gateway and the sunny park, where we mused on the brink of the Aln.

The empty foliated window at the top of the ivy-clad gable, and the tombs, are the best remembered features

of Dryburgh. Massive tombs of Aberdeen granite under the arch of St. Mary's aisle, mark the resting-place of Sir Walter and Lady Scott, and their eldest son. A fit resting-place it is for one whose pen wrought out a glorious fame for all the country round, and portrayed the scenes and personages of olden time with the matchless power that fascinates alike wherever books are read.

The guide leads from place to place, from refectory to chapter-house, and nave to cloister. Here and there a modern statue catches your eye—one of Newton, another, Inigo Jones. "What Jones is that?" asks a lady.

"He was a self-taught Welsh architect, I believe, celebrated for the bridges he built," answered one of the gentlemen.

I watched his eye, but not the slightest twinkle, or the shadow of a smile on his lips betrayed an intention to joke.

Then there was a rush to catch a train for Melrose; and left there with only the young clerk, I persuaded him to linger in the ruin; and as we sauntered about, he was constrained to say, that Dryburgh was worth seeing after all. But the maiden came back, and spoke of regulations which forbid uncontrolled liberty, so to save her the trouble of watching us, we departed. On our way back to the ferry, the American finds further fault with his countryman's criticisms on the Abbey; and does not see why the unhappy one in the boat complained of Jack in office. For his part he has nothing to say against England, except that it is so hot (!) and so dear: he has had to spend no end of money. As we recross the river, the ferryman tells us that much as is thought of Scott in far-away places,

there are hundreds of folk along Tweedside who have never read a word of his writings.

While we drank a bottle of beer together at Newtown, I mentioned Norham, and other places worth seeing; but the Philadelphian declares he will not stop; he wants to get on. He was not sure whether he would take the trouble to walk round the walls of Berwick. I pointed to a handbill of the Border games to be played at Jedburgh, and urged him to seize the opportunity; but no, nothing would satisfy him but going ahead. Presently the train arrived, and away he went to Berwick in a first-class carriage.

A few minutes more, and I was speeding along for Jedburgh, commencing my homeward journey. A change at Roxburgh transfers us to a line running to the south, through well-cultivated lands, and soon we cross the Teviot where the Jed flows in, and passing Bonjedward, we see the opening of a romantic vale, and alight at the Jedburgh station.

The place looks cheerful, as befits the county-town of Roxburghshire; and the sight of pleasant houses and gardens by the roadside puts one in good humour; and well-wooded hills on each side impart a sense of comfort as well as of beauty. Signs of preparation for the games to be played to-morrow are apparent, and the hostess of *The Harrow* tells me that beds will be scarce ere nightfall, for visitors will come thronging in from far and near. She knows many a one who will travel more than fifty miles to witness the sight.

With hours to spare, the afternoon seems a holiday to me. I find a bookseller willing to talk, and learn that the habit of reading and demand for books are both increasing. I discover the weaver who keeps the

key of the abbey, a man of soft voice and somewhat timid manner, who looks as if he knew what trouble is; but who fulfils satisfactorily his duty as guide. Situate in the heart of the town, there is less sense of seclusion in the ruin than at Melrose; but when you contemplate its lofty proportions, the rows of columns, and rows of arches, you will think it a noble rival to the other famous pile. Both were founded by David the First. If you take pains to find the right points of view, there are perspective effects to be seen that will make you glow with admiration. And you will commend the fostering care that prevents further dilapidation by timely repair. The western end is cut off by a wall, and used as the parish church.

I mount to the top of the tower, where the date 1136 appears on the weathercock. The view commanded by the lofty elevation calls forth an exclamation of pleasure. The Vale of Jed, hung with slopes of wood, stretches away to the hilly margin of the country, and beyond rises the dark flat mass of the Carter—the Border Hill, as the folk here call it. Over that lies our way back into Northumberland. To the right, close upon the town, appears the Castle Hill, crowned by the gaol, and beyond it the Dunion, the place of to-morrow's games.

> "And Ruberslaw show'd high Dunyon
> His beacon blazing red."

The top of a high hill seems a strange spot for games; yet so it is. Looking northwards, we see Hartrigg, the seat of Lord Campbell, on a pleasant slope; and far off, the monument on Pinelheugh, built in 1815 by the Marquis of Lothian and his tenantry to commemorate

the genius of Wellington and the valour of British troops. It looks down on the scene where Ancram Moor

> Ran red with English blood;
> Where the Douglas true, and the bold Buccleuch,
> 'Gainst keen Lord Evers stood."

Then we view the nearer objects from the churchyard at the foot of the tower, to the smiling gardens, and fields and plantations that engirdle the town. Slate has not yet superseded all the thatch in the streets, and while those lowly dwellings remain, we can mark the change for the better, and imagine the appearance of a border town in the olden time. No wonder the English made a bonfire of it seven times, in their forays. Lord Surrey has the credit of one of the burnings, and the demolition of the Abbey. But Jethart, as it was once called, boasted doughty fighting-men: as the minstrel tells—

> "And Jedwood, Eske, and Teviotdale,
> Have to proud Angus come;
> And all the Merse and Lauderdale
> Have risen with haughty Home."

And a Jethart staff was a formidable weapon; for do we not read that the Scots "bore axes, with which, in time of need, they gave hearty strokes;" and that steeds stood in Branksome Hall,

> "Barbed with frontlet of steel, I trow,
> And with Jedwood-axe at saddle-bow."

And that axe it was which bore the innocent name of staff.

History aids us as well as romance; for there in the gardens on the north of the town is a little thatched house in which the unhappy Queen of Scots once lay

sick of a fever. Here in Jedburgh Thomson was educated; and Jedburgh was the birthplace of Sir David Brewster, and Mrs. Mary Somerville.

The weaver was not impatient, and I lingered on the top of the tower till my eye was satisfied, and I had exhausted my applicable stock of ballad scraps. Then I strolled about the neighbourhood, catching the sound of the loom in many a cottage, looking at the hanks of worsted hung out to dry, and drinking on the hill-slope as you go up the vale, from the Memorial Fountain. It is placed conveniently at the roadside, bears a cross and urn, and as the inscription imports, is erected to the memory of the women and children who suffered in the Sepoy mutiny.

Late in the evening came more guests to *The Harrow*, Scots every one; and we had some lively talk about the forthcoming games. How enthusiastic they were in their wishes and expectations, making me aware that something more than a mere holiday was intended; that provincial fame and honour were deeply concerned. After a while the topic slid into the question of every-day amusements and recreations; and to my surprise the Scots were altogether unanimous in condemning the Forbes Mackenzie Act; and a few compliments were bestowed on the author thereof which he would hardly have thought flattering.

It is certainly surprising that a people so sagacious as the Scotch, so alive to the advantages of education, should need to be kept moral by act of parliament; and stranger still that any one should be found willing to believe such morality as that worth striving for. As if locking up the liquor constituted sobriety. As if men could be made virtuous by denial of the means to

gratify vice! For my part, I believe that sobriety would be promoted in Scotland, and in England too, by free trade in good beer; not such stuff as most brewers now concoct, but genuine wort from malt and hops. I have seen Englishmen drunk on beer, and felt ashamed of my countrymen; but not till I saw Scotchmen drunk on whisky did I know the utter hideousness of drunkenness. I have seen an elder of a kirk, a tall portly man, who looked dignified in his black garments, drink himself into a filthy condition below the reach of beer. John Barleycorn, with all his faults, is a gentleman compared with Glenlivat.

A wonderful people truly! driving an uncommonly hard bargain with Providence; and expecting favours from Him which they would never grant to one another. And in return there shall be rigour one day in seven; not the glad utterance of praise and thanksgiving bursting from the heart as warblings from the throat of a bird; but hard matters of doctrine, and grim Sabbatarianism. You may not whistle, not even a psalm tune, on the Sabbath; but you may get drunk in your secret chamber. One of Edinburgh's most enterprising resurrection-men would not work on the Sabbath; by no means; though he did not mind travelling down on the Sabbath to some country churchyard where a corpse was to be had; "but he wad na' break ground till after twal at nicht."

Nature, however, will not be cheated, and she compensates the hard-bargainers with a considerable amount of very practical drunkenness, and a display of financial hypocrisy among bankers—model men of the community, which keeps her balance even. And more, she has given to those hard-bargainers the sweetest

songs, and the most touching song-music in the world.

"The Arno and the Tiber lang
Hae ran fell clear in Roman sang;
But, save the reverence o' schools,
They're baith but lifeless, dowie fools.
Dought they compare wi' bonnie Tweed
As clear as ony lammer bead?
Or are their shores mair sweet and gay
Than Fortha's haughs or banks o' Tay?
Though there the herds can jink the showers
'Mang thriving vines and myrtle bowers,
And blaw the reed to kittle strains,
While echo's tongue commends their pains;
Like ours, they canna warm the heart
Wi' simple saft bewitching art.
On Leader haughs and Yarrow braes,
Arcadian herds wad tyne their lays,
To hear the mair melodious sounds
That live on our poetic grounds."

And bounteous even in compensations, Nature inspired a peasant-poet to write *Holy Willie's Prayer*, and a city-poet to sing,

"On Sunday, here, an altered scene
O' men and manners meets our een,
Ane wad maist trow, some people chose
To change their faces wi' their clo'es,
And fain wad gar ilk neighbour think
They thirst for guidness as for drink;
But there's an unco dearth o' grace,
That has nae mansion but the face,
And never can obtain a part
In benmost corner o' the heart.
Why should religion mak us sad,
If good frae virtue's to be had?
Na; rather gleefu' turn your face,
Forsake hypocrisy, grimace;
And never hae it understood
You fleg mankind frae being good."

While you are reading this digression, good-natured reader—that is, if you do read it—you must imagine

the conversation going on somewhat in the same strain, and ending by one of the company saying, "Wha made Provost Mackenzie wiser than ither folk, that's what I want to know?"

"It serves us right," answered another, "for if Scotland had but spoken out, the chiel wad never ha' gotten his act passed." And then I went to bed.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A Bright Holiday—Kindly Greetings—The Lists on the Dunion—Cakes and Ale—Rustic Talk—Grand Prospect—Jedburgh Games—Dingle-ding-ding—Compeetitors—Boy Wrestlers—Rustic Criticism—Boy Racers—An Awfu' Wund—Men Racers—Putting Light Ball—Putting Heavy Ball—Hop-step-and-leap—Hercules and Red Sark—Hitch and Kick—A Nimble Tailor—Single-stick, Dreary Pastime—Highland Piper, Highland Reels—Hurdle Race—Dinner-time—Orderly Throng—Reel o' Tulloch—Men Wrestlers—A Grand Match—Cumberland for ever—Ghillie Callum—Running and Leaping—Grand Steeple Chase—Departure.

A BRIGHT blue sky enlivened by great floating islands of SNOW-white cloud, the jangling of bells, a flag waving merrily on the abbey tower, and gay banners hanging from windows and housetops, are the sights and sounds that greet my eyes and ears on awaking. The earliest trains bring throngs of visitors, and word that more are coming. At nine o'clock the Jedburgh bands assemble in the Market-place, and do their best to inspirit the gathering, and presently with heart-stirring music, away they march up the steep ascent to the Dunion, followed by a straggling procession. It does one good to see how heartily the town sets about enjoying its holiday, and makes no pretence of being ashamed of amusement.

The musicians play as lustily, and the people walk and talk as briskly as if the long toilsome hill were an easy level. It is a pretty sight to look back when half way up on the numerous groups, men, women, and

children all clad in their best; some wearing a holiday decoration; a few of the men with their mauds thrown loosely over the shoulder, notwithstanding the July sun. And pleasant it is to hear the honest hearty voices of the country-folk as they salute one another, and speer kindly after friends at home. "Brawly, brawly, thank ye for speering," is the reply; and in the general gladness the three very dismal beggars who raise their voices by the wayside, are favoured with unwonted doles.

About half a mile brings us to an elevated grassy table-land, traversed by the road which stretches onwards to Hawick, and abutting in the rear upon a second hill, a rugged cone, the summit of the Dunion. Near the centre of this plateau the ground is fenced off for the games; an admirable site with room for thousands of spectators. Flanking the inclosure stand rows of refreshment booths, bearing the signs of the publichouses in the town, and stalls with cakes and gingerbread, and berries, and toys, around which the children already congregate in prattling glee. Here a fiddler, there a piper, there a ballad-singer, tries the effect of popular airs on popular generosity, and not without a profitable result. On one side is a large stand with tier upon tier of seats open to all who pay a shilling; on the other are the stands for the musicians, on which the banners flutter noisily, for up here the wind blows half a gale. Rows of spectators sit on low benches, or on the ground just within the fence; while the outside is crowded with solid belts of those who pay nothing, and take their chance.

Taking my seat on the stand next in front of a party of rustics who occupy an upper tier, I soon become aware that they afford me something more than shelter from

the wind, which changes to a chilly blast when clouds hide the sun; for they speak the rustic vernacular, the real Doric, to perfection. One who talks more than all the rest is rich in native accent. Here in the north on both sides of the border, the double *l* is spoken as a guttural,—in our rustic's throat you would fancy it came out with a bubble, when he addresses his companion "Wull-y."

Apart from the immediate spectacle, there is a charm almost indescribable in the prospect which meets the eye from this lofty site. Westwards, the view is bounded by the topmost slopes of the Dunion; but to the south-east, and north we see hill and valley for miles and miles, the brown heath chequered with bright green or pale yellow, revealing the fair dominions of the plough, and touched with endless light and shade as the clouds drift by. And facing me as I sit there rises the Carter, dark and sullen some three leagues distant. Think of the pleasure that befals spectators in such a place, with a magnificent panorama to feast their eyes on every time they look up from the lists!

The Jedburgh games were first held four years ago to celebrate the Marquis of Lothian's coming of age, and proved so successful that they have been repeated every year since, and may now be considered as an institution. It may be fairly questioned, whether in the Merry England of the olden time, the sports and games excited lustier emulation, or yielded more enjoyment.

It is ten o'clock, the throng is multiplied on all sides, the stand is well-nigh filled, the judge and stewards take their places, and the bellman with a dingle-ding-ding, calls on "compeetitors to come in." A few lads start up from the ground where they have been lying,

a few more get over the fence, others come from the dressing-tent in the corner, until altogether there are eight couples ready for a wrestling-match. Most of them throw off their upper garments and appear in close-fitting drawers and vest, and as soon as one couple have had their round another takes their place. With some it is an affair of a moment, no sooner gripped than one is thrown: others make a struggle and display considerable strength and agility. The grip was new to me; the two look over shoulders, as in an embrace on the stage, pass their arms round each other's back, and make fast by clipping the two hands together. The strain exerted when the interlocking is complete, is very great, at times to danger of choking; but it not unfrequently happens, that a back is too broad for the arms to encircle, in which case the one who cannot reach, is at a disadvantage, for no grasp of the garment is permitted, as in Cornwall.

"Thot's no wrostlin!" cried the rustic behind me, as a big lad opposed to a little lad keeps him at arms' length, and after a stubborn resistance bends him backwards by dint of mere strength. "Thot's no wrostlin.' Ca' he a lod? Look at his theegh. Did ye ever see a lod wi siccan a theegh. Thot's a mon's theegh." He sympathises with the little one, and thinks he would have conquered "if his fit had na' slippit."

"The muckle one" does not win after all: that honour is achieved by a bony youth, who when he has taken his grip seems to become as unyielding as iron. He gets the first prize—seven shillings, and four, three and two shillings, are awarded to the three next in order.

Another dingle-ding-ding, and "compeetitors" for the foot-race are bidden to come in. A course of a

hundred yards to be run by boys under sixteen; and to prevent disputes as to age none but Jedburgh boys are admitted.

A rail is taken down at the western end of the lists, the crowd divides to clear the course, and a score of boys amble up to the starting-post. There they form a line, the signal is given, and away they fly: a pretty sight. A burst of voices hails their approach: two outstrip the others, and the foremost of the two is a little fellow—little but sprightly; and our rustic shouts encouragingly, "The wee yane, the wee yane!"

But the other has longer legs, and when within a few yards of the goal, distances his nimble rival; and in less time than it has taken to describe, the race is run, and the little fellow may console himself with half-a-crown and generous acclamations for having missed the five-shilling prize.

"Hey, mon! it 's an awfu' wund," says Rustic with a shrug, and a look at the dark gray cloud that chills the wind as it comes up from the west.

Then the same course is run by eighteen men, of whom four come in so near together, that some onlookers wish there were four prizes instead of two. Fine athletic fellows they are, with an ease of movement that an Iroquois might admire; their proportions well displayed by the close fit of their dress. The most wear white; but some sport colours, red or blue, and one who is striped from head to foot, is named the zebra by acclamation. His appearance should be a warning to all who placed stripes on the human figure in any other direction than up and down.

Down comes the blast again, and Rustic repeats "Hey, mon, it 's an awfu' wund."

Dingle-ding-ding once more, and a proclamation to

"compeetitors" for "putting the light ball." The men are already there; the round stone ball weighing six pounds is brought, and he who throws it farthest wins ten shillings. The "throwing," or "putting," requires a peculiar effort, an oscillation of the body, a swing of the arm in accordance therewith, and the delivery of the stone from the hand by the combined movement. Any attempt to throw in the ordinary way meets with ludicrous failure, and one or two of the men, whose demonstrations promise a long shot, fall short of five yards, and get themselves heartily laughed at. There are but three really good throwers among them, and to see their heave you would think they meant to throw themselves with the ball. The best makes seventy-eight feet; the second, two feet less.

Dingle-ding-ding: "compeetitors," for "putting the heavy ball." This ball weighs twenty-one pounds, and looks about the size of a man's head. Among the fresh men who come in is one who, though somewhat ungainly in movement, is a very Hercules in stature.

Meanwhile the dark, gray cloud has drifted onwards, a few large drops of rain fall, and a heavy shower seems imminent. "We'll hae to tak it, just," says Rustic; and he and his mates sit closer together, and prepare for the worst. Happily the shower lasts but two minutes; but the "awfu' wund" continues.

In the heavy putting the arm is bent till the back of the hand is brought over the shoulder, the ball lying in the palm, and the throw is accomplished by a powerful cast direct from the shoulder. Hercules gets thirty-five feet, and his rival is but two inches short: both remarkable throws. Indeed, the general impression is, that the heavy ball-play is far better than the light ball-play.

Dingle-ding-ding, and we have preparations for a standing hop-step-and-leap. Hercules is one of the competitors; he takes off his highlows, and, as he walks past carrying them in his hand, Rustic says, "Look at his shoon, did ye ever see sic shoon? they're as big as boats."

It is amazing to see what flights are taken through the air! Hercules does well, but seems to me to owe his distance more to length of limb than agility; for his heels strike the ground with a thud heavy enough for an elephant. He clears thirty-feet six inches without a run, be it remembered. But a slim young lad from Hawick, conspicuous by his scarlet vest, does better, and with his hop, stride, and jump—as we say in the south—clears thirty feet eleven inches.

"Thot's him, thot's him!" cries Rustic, "him wi' the red sark, I dinna mind his neam;" pointing the victor out to his companions, while the bellman proclaims the distance.

That slim young lad, if not misled by flattery and whisky, will probably become famous as a leaper, for Nature has given him a proper length of leg, and a development of steatopygea which, while reminding you of a negress, betokens a generous supply of muscle.

"Hey, mon, it's an awfu' wund," breaks in Rustic once more; and indeed it is cold, making me shiver; and the leapers wrap themselves in mauds and thick rough coats in the pauses of the game. Better so, however, than a sweltering heat.

Then follows hop, stride, and jump, with a run, but not to the glory of Redsark; he gets neither the first or second prize. Forty-three feet seven inches by another man from Hawick wins the first, and forty-three feet by Hercules wins the second. To this

succeeds Hitch and Kick—a feat quite new to me. A staff, upon which slides a moveable bracket, is fixed upright in the ground; you might fancy it the measuring rod by which the recruiting sergeant takes the height of smart young men anxious to fight for their country; and the bracket being set at a height of six feet, a disk of parchment stretched on a hoop about the size of a dessert plate, is laid upon it. A few minutes of calm would now be desirable, for the disk is so light that it is repeatedly blown off. The game consists in the player leaping up by the side of the staff, and while up kicking the disk off the bracket, and then giving something like a polka hitch with his heel before he touches the earth. Hence the name Hitch and Kick; not an easy effort of gymnastics, as any one who has a soft place to practise on may uncomfortably prove. Redsark springs first, and away flies the disk, as if six feet were but a joke; and three or four others that follow are equally successful. One of them is a short, burly fellow, by far too thick and heavy for feats of vaulting ambition, as one might judge, yet he leaps agile as a pantaloon.

"He's a tailyer, I tell ye he's a tailyer!" argues Rustic loudly, to settle a dispute as to the heavy leaper's calling.

The bracket is pushed up to seven feet, and now the players must kick to a considerable height above their heads, and they all but one knock off the disk, and that one, incredible as it may seem, is not the thick "tailyer." But he fails at the next trial, with the bracket raised to eight feet; and although I see three others leap up and send the disk flying with that surprising, high-jerked kick, I can hardly believe my own eyes. Another rise—eight feet six—they all fail. A

little lower—there, eight feet two—the players try again, and one of the three dislodges the parchment.

"Weel dune! weel dune!" cry the rustics: "thot's braw."

Redsark, though lithe and light, has missed the first prize; the second is shared between him and the next best, so nearly equal are they in skill.

Then comes a course of single-stick, for which one of the umpires is a sapper, in scarlet jacket, a functionary of the Ordnance Survey. The play is poor; not equal to the guinea allotted as first prize. The fencers are as much afraid of one another as a certain admiral was of the Russians in the Baltic. They parry violently, forgetting the trooper's axiom, "Strike, do nothing but strike, let the other parry if he can." The spectators yawn; the rustics, to improve the time, struggle their way down and go to dinner, and every body seems glad when the single-stick is over. A couple of Berkshire backsword players would have made a different impression.

In struts a piper in full costume, tartan kilt and scarf, bonnet and plumes, and proudly paces he to and fro, making the air resound with his music, and restoring the animation lost by that dreary single-stick. A wooden floor is lifted into the middle of the ground, and three men, also in full Highland costume, come forward and dance Highland reels. A pretty sight here in the open air, and the men trip over the boards with the vigour of champions. How the pipes skirl! a very storm of notes, that makes every heel quiver; and here on the windy hill-top, there is a charm in the music, which we should listen for in vain under a roof. One of the dancers becomes intoxicated by it, and he embellishes his part with an occasional Highland shriek

To me their merits appear equal; but the judges see a difference, and award the prizes accordingly.

Then the end of the lists is opened again, for the Hurdle Race is to be run: five hundred yards, and five hurdles three feet high to be leaped. Fourteen men enter, all in drawers and vests, and some without shoes. They spring lightly over the hurdles on their way up the slope to the starting-point. They are off, and in an instant, as it seems, are at the first hurdle, and over they fly altogether, as if a white wave had suddenly risen and sunk. Ere we have recovered from our surprise they are at the second hurdle, but the movement is broken and the leaps are scattered; still more so at the third and fourth, but on they come to the fifth, in the middle of the lists, bound over without pause, and the three prizes are fairly won. Two or three are in the language of the turf "nowhere;" and one who walks mournfully in with dress besoiled, and in disarray, showing how heavy has been his fall, is treated to more laughter than all the rest put together.

And so ends the first act, and with due consideration for dinner, we are to have an hour before the second begins. Every body goes to dinner, and soon the booths are over-crowded, and ham and beef, and mutton-pies are clamorously sought after; some have brought supplies in baskets, and lack nothing but beer. And beer is to be had in abundance, but in bottles; you must either take a quart, or go without. An arrangement which to me seems stupid.

It is surprising what good appetites we all have, and how good humoured we all are. Those who can't find room at the tables wait with exemplary patience, and those who are seated make all the haste they can, to let the others in, and those who are satisfied stroll

about and look at the stalls, and listen to the ballad-singers, or contemplate the thimble-riggers with cautious admiration.

As the hour draws to a close we find our way back to the lists. The rustics are in their former place, and I take mine as before. And now we see how the crowd has multiplied; many have come up from the town who could not get away in the forenoon, and late arrivals from a distance have had time to travel in. There are about four thousand present, densely packed on each side of the lists. Yet there is no quarrelling, no riot, no drunkenness; the only sign of tippling is one shabby-looking man who wants to get on the ground, but the police tame him forthwith, and he disappears. A more orderly concourse, one that more thoroughly enjoyed their pastime, I never saw.

So keen is the eagerness to see that hundreds swarm into the lists, where they fill the ground on each side, most of them squatting or lying on the grass. There is a notable sprinkling of shepherds among them, wrapped in their grey weather-beaten mauds. The buzz of voices grows louder, and every pause in the sports is filled by the music: now the full band; now the drums and fifes. And the piper strikes up again, and the Reel o' Tulloch is danced with a vigour that shows how intimate is the sympathy between dinner and dancing.

Then follows a grand wrestling match, for which the first prize is six pounds and a belt, and no sooner has the clapper struck the signal to the "compeetitors," than sundry men among those on the ground in the lists begin to undress, and presently appear in vest and drawers, some without stockings and all without shoes. Couple after couple come together, and exhibit mas-

terly wrestling, whereat Rustic cries "Thot's a good yane." Some are thrown almost as soon as they have gripped; others prolong the struggle for five or ten minutes, and avail themselves of all the resources of the art. The most are Scots; but wrestlers have come from over the Border to show that Cumberland, and Westmoreland, and Northumberland, and Durham have not forgotten their ancient prowess: and a man from Carlisle is pointed out to me as the fairest wrestler in all the north-country. Clearly this is the great event of the day; every one gazes with eager attention; and Rustic even forgets his observations on the "wund."

Of course time has flown quickly; the morning programme encroached an hour on the afternoon, and now it is five o'clock and the wrestlers have not got through their first round. No sooner have one couple separated than another come on. When will they stop?

For my part, I have planned to sleep to-night in England, and must therefore depart. Not without difficulty I shoulder my way down from the seats, and out from the throng; and before I am out of hearing the blast repeats its chilly rush, and Rustic declares once more, "Hey mon! it's an awfu' wund."

While walking down to the town I may as well tell what further happened. Forty wrestlers, twenty couples, stood up for the first round. Hercules was one of those who fell. The twenty conquerors then made ten couples for the second round, in which the Carlisle man went down. The third round mustered five couples; the fourth, two, until at last the man from Longtown and the man from Weardale met for the final struggle. Durham fell; and the victory remained with "canny aul Cummerlan."

And the other games were, the dancing of Ghillie Callum; a hurdle-race for two purses of gold and one of silver, given by the ladies of Jedburgh; a foot-race for tobacco; a race in sacks; high leaping with and without a pole; and last, a grand steeple-chase on foot to the top of the Dunion and back, a distance of two miles, the first all up hill, growing steeper and steeper. A most formidable task. Eleven men started; but the first to turn the flagstaff was one from Edinburgh, and as the local historian says, "he distanced the others by a good few yards." Owing to the repeated encroachments made on the allotted time, this race was not run till eight o'clock, and then heavy rain caused a hasty clearance.

The town looked deserted, with shops all shut, and inhabitants migrated. I saw the postmaster sealing up a mail: he wanted to know how the games went, having been kept prisoner hitherto, but told me he should now be able to run up for a peep, only he must be back in time to make up the seven o'clock mail. *The Harrow* too, was all but deserted, scarcely any one left competent to tell me what I had to pay. However, we arrived at a result, and then I started for the Carter.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A Quiet Walk—Vale of Jed—Good News for Anglers—The Carter Fell—Walking under a Rainbow—The Summit—Grand Prospect—Redesdale—Whitelee—Unsavoury Mutton—Shepherds' Diet—The Carrier and the Carter—Road to Chevy Chase and Bremenium—A Trackless Walk—Girdle Fell—Hideous Mountains—A Moss-hag—Loneliness—Effect of Dreams—Treacherous Heather—A Swamp—A Rest by the Brook—The Keeldar Burn—Cottages and Farms—A Pastoral Vale—The Cout of Keeldar—Keeldar Castle—Friendly Reception—Helping the Haymakers—A Bruff round the Sun—Cranberry Gathering—The Storm—The Freshet—Vale of North Tyne—The Road into Liddelsdale—Effects of the Rain—A Happy Dinner—A Brisk Walk—Falstone—Bellingham.

After all that excitement, a quiet walk will do us good. I have had a last look at the abbey in passing, a last drink at the Memorial Fountain, and am now enjoying the scenery of the valley of the Jed. There is wood in abundance; great slopes of trees that come near together in places, and give the impression of a dell; and here and there the red bank peeps through, or a long red scar interposes a streak of rich colour, while the river, now hidden by foliage, now showing its cheerful current and stony bed to the wayfarer, flows beneath with many a winding. The road passes from side to side with the changing level, and to vary the walk, and discover what there is of romantic and picturesque, you may descend to the edge of the stream, and pick a way along its margin under the deep shadows, and take to the road again at the next bridge. You then see all the pretty humours of the river, and

hear its quick babbling and tranquil murmurs, and mark the deeper curves where it seems to obey the poet's spell:—

> "O, softly, Jed! thy sylvan current lead
> Round every hazel copse and smiling mead,
> Where lines of fir the glowing landscape screen,
> And crown the heights with tufts of deeper green."

And where a wee bit burnie comes prattling, in there you find a miniature glen so full of ferns and luxuriant weeds that you will pause awhile to admire their beauty.

To one fond of the angle the Jed is a promising stream; let him fix his head-quarters at Jedburgh and walk some ten miles up the vale and fish down, and while his basket grows heavy with trout, his eye may feast on scenes that inspire only delight. And I am told that no fee, or asking leave is required.

Now the road descends to the level of the stream, now it mounts a rise whence there are broad views of the vale for miles; views that memory recalls with pleasure. Then another bridge, from which our last peep at the river is one of the prettiest; you would not imagine that bowery scene to be within an hour's walk of bleak moorlands. Here is the entrance to a park, and a row of cottages, named Camptown, by the roadside, undergoing transformation, from rude, rough walls and thatch, to squared masonry and slate. A little farther there stands a small church, then a smithy, then the trees become fewer and fewer, and the hedgerows thinner, till at last they cease, and we come to the foot of the wild and desolate Carter Fell.

The road ascends by frequent zigzags, that lengthen the way. I was looking for the cut-off, a path direct up the rough slope, when the lowering clouds fulfilled

their prolonged threat and a heavy rain fell, that made the ground hiss again. The shelter was all left behind, so there was nothing for it but to travel on, and by the road, for I missed the cut-off in the furious rain-drifts. Higher and higher mounts the way into the wild region, where all looks sullen—rock, and heath, and coarse reedy grass, and every drain and channel is an impetuous torrent. Anon the sun shines through a rent in the rugged clouds, and a magnificent rainbow bestrides the hill above me; every step brings me nearer to it, nearer and nearer, till at length I pass under the brilliant arch. In Bohemia the peasantry hold it unlucky to walk under a rainbow, and they say that the rain which descends through the bow blights all it falls upon. For my part I felt no harm, but saw wondrous effects of light and shade in the mist and scud, and as the storm thinned away, the hills looked so fresh and soft, as if they were the hills of fairy land. Another furlong, and there was the end of the road leading to Hawick, down which I had travelled in the earliest of my long walks; and now I knew the features of the Border hill from two directions.

A little higher stands "the Scotch toll-bar," which is also a public-house, and a mountain refuge, welcome to the traveller in the storms and snows of winter. The old woman and little girl, the only persons at home, appeared so mistrustful of me that I resolved to go on and take my chance. By this time the rain had blown away to the east, where, with the dark, piled-up masses of cloud, it formed an awful distance in the landscape, leaving the nearer scenes resplendent with the sheen of sunset. I turned for a parting view of Scotland. As I looked on the rounded hills in the foreground, and the white slopes, gray, and brown, and

green, stretching away to the cultivated region, and the dark masses of wood below, how forcibly was I reminded of that September afternoon in my youthful days, when I walked up hither from Chevy Chase, and the view of Scotland burst upon me. Then the heather was in bloom, and gowans in tens of thousands were looking at the sun, and every hill seemed to me a wave of purple and gold, rolling farther and farther away till the tints blended with the pale blue of ridges beyond the Tweed. Then Nature displayed the fulness of her pomp; now the landscape lay placid in the gladness of a summer rain, the distances are half veiled by straying mists; yet there are gleams from the sinking sun which seem to foretell the fulness of beauty for the morrow.

A few minutes later, and I had passed the brow and was descending the southern slope into Redesdale. Here befel that Raid of the Reedswire when arguments ended in flights of arrows, as is told in the ballad. The view on the right takes in a great expanse of fells, ridge after ridge rising green and black against the evening sky; and all as solitary as the ocean. I could not fail to notice as I went on how by dint of drainage and tillage, cultivation has advanced upon the wild. Here two miles from the summit are a farm and fields, where formerly the only house was "the English bar," and here at Whitelee I hope to stop for the night.

It is nine o'clock; there is a carrier busy making his cart safe for the night near the door; and somewhat to my surprise, considering the very humble aspect of the place, I am told by the ancient hostess that I can have a bed. Her daughter is getting tea ready for the carrier, and I can have tea with him.

The table is already set in front of the fire, for the evening is chilly, and she invites me to begin at once, and I readily comply. There is not a drop of milk to be had, the butter is salted, the bread is very stale; but there is part of a leg of mutton. I help myself liberally, but the first mouthful is enough—more than enough, with its flavour of a dissecting-room. I remembered then what I had heard about shepherd's perquisites—the sheep that die on the fells. These unlucky carcases are carried home and pickled and salted, and eaten by the shepherd and his family, who actually acquire a relish for this horrid food, and prefer it to fresh meat. A keeper told me that he once gave a pair of rabbits to a shepherd whom he met on the hills; but Corydon threw them away before he reached home. One consequence of the foul mutton diet is a breaking out of painful and unsightly boils upon the eaters.

The carrier, however, who comes presently in, eats heartily of the Redesdale ham: and proves himself a willing talker. The opportunity is favourable, for the old woman lights her pipe and takes a quiet smoke by the fireside, and the house gives me to understand that it is curious to know what brought me hither. My answer, that I had long had a desire to repeat my walk over the Carter, provoked a gruff chuckle from the carrier, and the retort "Hu! then you like it better than I do. I wishes it was away every time I goes over it." Familiarity had bred in him an utter weariness of the big hill, over which he journeys twice a week on his way from Jedburgh to Elsdon, and back; and he doesn't see any good in having to drag his load up 1923 feet, either for him or his horse. This is his half-way house; he sleeps here two nights

in the week; and to him some thirty miles of country are indebted for many elements of comfort. He brings groceries, and bread, and physic, and a hundred articles which a town only can supply, and tells all the news into the bargain. Through him the whole country-side are neighbours, and hear of one another's welfare.

On his way to Elsdon, he crosses the field of Chevy Chase at Otterburn; but does not see anything wonderful in it; as well might you expect a cabman to feel an emotion in Smithfield because Wat Tyler was there murdered. He knows there is a song about the old battle, and Widdrington who fought on his stumps, and that an old stone cross stands on the field; but what is all that in comparison with a fine day for him and his horse?

My bed-room is in a wing added to the house, where luxury has not yet penetrated. Of the two chairs, one does duty as washstand; the sheets are clean, and the window will open, and from the dim night there enters to lull me to sleep the pretty tinkle of a brook that runs past on its way to the Reed.

The carrier was preparing to start when I came down the next morning, happy in the prospect of fine weather. Who would not be happy, with such a fresh green earth to walk upon, and a bright sky overhead? I strolled about till breakfast was ready enjoying the cool breeze. All around the view is bounded by wild solitary hills, among which farm and toll-house and two or three cottages form a little world to themselves.

As already mentioned, I had walked the road from Elsdon hither, had seen the field of Chevy Chase, that memorable battle which is never to be forgotten while ballad-singers remain; which as we are assured by no

less an authority than Froissart, "was the hardest and most obstinate battle that ever was fought." That road leads also to Bremenium, an outlying Roman station, of great importance in an antiquarian point of view, which has recently been excavated and cleared by order of the Duke.

But I had not seen the west side of the county, and desirous to get thither by the shortest route, I explored the huge height of Girdle Fell with my telescope; for that must first be crossed. Wild and trackless lay the broad slopes in the sunshine. The distance to Keeldar Castle is nine miles, as the crow flies; the old woman, vaunting her intimate knowledge of the country, declares it impossible to miss the way, if I do but keep on straight for the west. And yet she tells me of two sappers who went astray, thought they were in one glen when all the time they were in another, and so, as night was coming on, they just sat down and waited till morning. To impress me with a favourable notion of the resources of her house, the canny old body served my breakfast in the lower room of the wing, where as she took care to let me know, large parties have dined; and she had got two eggs from the farm; but milk was out of the question.

The hours kept their early promise; in such weather a walk across the hills would be delightful; I got a passing shepherd to point in the direction of Keeldar, took the bearings with my compass, and started. The Reed which flows a few yards in the rear of the house was easily crossed on the big stones in its bed, and then began the ascent; a long, long rise to the top of Girdle Fell, from rough, coarse grass to breadths of brighter green where the blade is short and close, and rocks peep out, and the sheep most resort. From this

to patches of heath, then dense beds laborious to walk through, and frequent gaps, many feet deep in the peaty soil, and there must be a scrambling down and scrambling up, or if the bottom be slimy, a tramp round the end all through the wiry heather. 'Tis hard work; but the view from the summit, a height of 1683 feet, looking down Redesdale is so vast, so intersected with hilly profiles, that it well repays the labour. But in the other direction—that in which we are going—the prospect strikes you with a chill: a wide, black upland region, which looks wintry even in the sunshine. The eye ranges it in vain for something lovely to look upon: no living thing is in sight except the whaups, as Northumbrians call curlews, flying round and round with uneasy cry. These summits must surely be the "hideous mountains," described by old writers. Far in the distance two white stakes, "Sappers' marks," show that men have trodden these dreary wilds, or we might fancy ourselves the first explorers. The song of the lark would be out of place here; the curlew's cry harmonises with the scene, as does the harsh cry of sea-fowl, with storm-beaten islets and headlands.

My progress across this sombre landscape was ere long checked by a moss-hagg: an inky-looking lake studded with numerous islets and hummocks, on which alone footing can be found. To jump and stride from one to the other is no agreeable task; at times you must try back and seek a safer course; here and there a hummock rocks and trembles as you alight on it—treacherous spots on which it is difficult to keep a balance, especially with the weight of a knapsack on your shoulder. And then when you think the firm ground is reached it turns out to be only a promontory, and having crossed that the leaping has all to be done

over again. But after all, the exercise is good; and if you pause on an islet and scan the curious vegetation round its rim, and take a survey of the environing bog besprinkled with light cotton-tufts, you are rewarded by an aspect of Nature to which hitherto you have perhaps been a stranger.

What with the frequent doublings and windings hither and thither, I had to take a new departure when the bog was crossed; not an easy operation where the object seen from the starting-point is no longer in sight. However, remembering that the sun was beginning to peep into my left eye when I set off, I made allowance for his advance and strode away for the farther ridge.

Even on the firm ground there are so many deep gaps in the surface, and the heath is so stubborn, that it took me more than an hour to walk from ridge to ridge. The shepherd told me I should see Keeldar from the top of Girdle Fell; but I could not get even a glimpse of it from this second hill. Before me opened a wide deep valley, where there is more of verdure than of blackness, but green of such a colour as betokens swamp, all the way down to the stream which winds along at the foot of the opposite hills. The solitude is as complete as before, save that at times the faint and far-off bleating of sheep is heard. It is a spot in which to feel utterly alone; where to be caught in a storm, or in a mist would make a stranger feel himself a coward. Yet on a fine day, what an abounding sense of freedom is inspired by the silent interminable fells!

Nature is not however left wholly to herself, for we come at times to drains dug a mile long or more on the hill-sides, and their effect is seen in the difference of grass; fine and sweet or in process of becoming so

on the drained portions; coarse and sour and rough on the other. The benefit is felt in the improvement of the climate, soil, and sheep. The elevation is considerable, for here cloud-berries are numerous, dotting the ground with their rich orange coloured globes, pleasing to the eye, and gratifying to the palate by their agreeable acid flavour. The shepherds call them knout, or knope-berries.

On my way down the slope I jumped from a crag to a belt of heather below; doubting not that, as usual, heather indicated firm dry ground; but to my surprise I plunged up to the middle in a deep drain which happened to be brimming full of coffee-coloured pulp, and was completely masked by the plants. "What a treat!" was my involuntary ejaculation, as I scrambled out, my legs all clammy and dripping. Better so, than up to the neck in a bog, I thought, as I sat down on a mossy mound, and with some wiping and rubbing and a pair of dry socks from my knapsack, renewed my ability to walk.

The slope proved so treacherous and spongy that I had to diverge to the black ground, and skirt that, in search of a firmer way, and lower down found it possible to take to the grass: it sounds squash—squash under foot, but being coarse and somewhat matted together it yields support; to cross it, however, is very harassing work. When farther down I saw that the centre of the valley was filled by a conical hill, and I turned my steps towards it in the hope of escaping the swamp, and of discovering my longitude.

Presently I came to a deep gulley, rugged slopes of gravel, and their base the channel of a noisy burn; and here it was so warm and sheltered, that I sat down to rest and refresh myself with bread and cheese. For

drink there was the water of the burn, cool and delicious. I began to feel tired: four hours had passed since I left Whitelee, and where was Keeldar, which I ought to have reached in three hours? For a moment I suspected my compass of deception; but the sun, which had now mounted high enough to look me full in the face, convinced me of the needle's faithfulness.

After all, with long days and a clear sky, why should not a wayfarer take his ease? I stretch myself on a cushion of heather, and dream away half-an-hour in deep enjoyment of the solitude and repose, yet with a fancy that I have a companion in the talkative burn. What pretty tales he tells me of his infant wanderings high up in the lonely places of the hills; of his first leaps in tiny cascades; of his wiles among the rocks; how he clothes the crevices with fern to conceal the deep grooves he is wearing away; of mossy banks, and borders of turf, softer than velvet, where none but fairies tread, and flowers that overhang to look at their graceful shadows in his sparkling stream; of birds which no man molests; of his morning psalm, his noontide carol, his even-song; and of anthems trilled only by moonlight. 'Tis noontide now, and his carol has a burden, and it is,—

> "For men may come, and men may go,
> But I go on for ever."

I scrambled out of the gulley, and resumed my trudge up the hill. Not till another drain was crossed was I fairly out of the swamp, and then every step led me to better grass and drier ground. The view from the summit was but a repetition, with more variety, of hill and dale, and a valley crossing the one I have

descended at right angles: no signs of the habitations or plantations which were promised. There is not, however, the same loneliness, for all the slopes are covered with sheep, and bleatings innumerable resound on all sides. It was time, at all events, that I should be on the Keeldar Burn. To discover it I followed a rill down the steep northern slope of the hill, and it led me on with gladsome windings, until at the foot it falls into a rapid stream—a small river by a low point on which is built a circular stone-fenced sheep-fold.

I turned my face to the south along the level grassy margin of the stream, and had no sooner reached the bend of the hill than I saw cottages on the farther side, and a row of stepping-stones. On my crossing over, a woman who stood at her washing-tub on the brink, told me the stream was the Keeldar; that the path on the right bank would lead me to a road, the road to the castle. She did not know if many strangers came that way; she had only come there at Whitsuntide; as yet, I was the first she had seen. Her husband was a shepherd, and the place was very lonesome; but she did not mind that, she was used to it.

A little beyond the cottages stands a farmhouse known as West Keeldar, with a potato field between it and the river, but it scarcely disturbs the lonesomeness. What does the tenant think about in such a place? Are his sheep sufficient to keep him from mental stagnation? In the winter he must be as much cut off from the world, as if he were on the prairies of the Missouri. One thing is certain, that the people who live down the valley nearer to the towns, speak of the dwellers in the hill-country as mere money-grubbers.

I found it pleasant walking along the margin of the

pastures, in and out, following the windings of the burn; now across a bright sandy hollow scooped out by a flood, now through gay beds of thistles, or among little knolls and cushions of wild thyme, which swell up solid masses of bloom, regaling alike eye and nostril. The river has a lively current, but loiters in places behind the bends, and reveals here and there such a width of dry stony bed, as betrays the angry character of its freshets. Many a fin lurks there in the pools, or prowls on the shallows, for I saw trout leaping, as if they, too, knew what it was to have a Saturday half-holiday. The valley, too, is cheerful of aspect: a breadth of level pasture on the right bank, while on the left the great slopes approach the water, and breezy heights meet the eye on every side.

And here again we have a legend to multiply our pleasures. Here in this valley once lived a young chief, who, from his strength and activity, was known as the Cout of Keeldar. Cout is Northumbrian for Colt.

"The ladye sigh'd as Keeldar rose:
'Come tell me, dear love mine,
Go you to hunt where Keeldar flows,
Or on the banks of Tyne?'

'The heathbell blows where Keeldar flows,
By Tyne the primrose pale;
But now we ride on the Scottish side,
To hunt in Liddelsdale.'

'Gin you will ride on the Scottish side,
Sore must thy Margaret mourn;
For Soulis abhorred is Lyddall's lord,
And I fear you'll ne'er return.'"

How the lady's foreboding came true, and her husband was drowned in the Keeldar Burn by the arts of the wicked Lord Soulis, of Hermitage Castle, may

be read in the Border Minstrelsy. His grave may still be seen, a large grassy mound, near the ruin where, as the legend says, his huntsmen still lie in enchanted sleep.

As the shepherdess said, the path leads to a road, a narrow sandy road, which looks as if the fells begrudged it a bare existence, yet not to be lightly regarded, when we remember that it is the highway of civilisation, between the busy world and solitude. Thus far wheeled vehicles may come; and we see that the road turns and ends at the farm of East Keeldar on the left bank. There are actually a few firs and alders growing near the house to relieve the bareness; and there are cattle as well as sheep in the pastures; and meadows of "mowing-grass" enrich the side of Keeldar.

A few more alders appear as we go on, here and there in the hollows; but they look as if Nature took but little pride in them. The vale widens, the grass improves, and by and by we see great plantations; a very forest of firs darkening the hill-side, then beeches, alders, and oaks, and such a maze of foliage as might make us believe we had come suddenly into a warmer zone. And there are willows of remarkably handsome appearance, which, as a learned Linnean tells me, are the species known as *Salix pentandra*. It is now three in the afternoon, and I am more than ever puzzled to guess what the shepherd meant by telling me I should see the Keeldar plantations from the top of Girdle Fell.

A little farther under the trees, and there are farm-buildings on one side of a green, and on the other an embrasured hunting-seat, flanked by abundance of foliage. That is Keeldar Castle. The sight of chil-

dren playing on the lawn struck me as of good omen: I entered a courtyard, and asked for Mr. Lucas. He was away in the hayfield, said a lassie, and she showed me where to seek him. A path down a steep slope brought me to a footbridge hung on wires, that plays see-saw as you step thereon. It crosses the Keeldar a few yards above its confluence with the North Tyne; and looking back from the farther side, you see that the castle stands on the top of a bold knoll-like promontory which stretches down to the meeting of the two rivers. Though but a modern building, erected by the late Duke, it looks picturesque and pleasing, with the broad green slopes dropping down to the rapid stream that flows past in a bold curve, and with its girdle of wood.

I found Mr. Lucas in the buttery-haugh, a large meadow watered by the Tyne—at the head of a troop of haymakers. He read the missive which I had brought from Alnwick Castle, stuck his fork in the ground, said a few words to his following, took me back to the house, and set me down to eat and drink. Would I have a collop of bacon? it should be ready in a minute; and after my hard walk, and forced abstinence in Scotland, the home-brewed ale seemed none other than "merry-go-down." Meantime, I established friendly relations with the mistress, and began to sap the shyness of the children, among whom were four bonny girls, sharers of their mother's good looks, and a baby boy, the pet of the family.

Then, wouldn't I stay all night? there was plenty of room; and seeing that to find other quarters I should have to walk nine miles farther, to Falstone; and that it would be agreeable to tarry a little longer in this primitive region, I accepted the kind invitation. Then,

as the hay must be carried ere sunset, for to-morrow will be Sunday, the Castellan, as we may call him, says he must return to the field; and as my holiday does not seem complete without a touch of haymaking, I accompany him. Of course we clever people up in London can do anything, so with fork in hand, I must head the file, and keep ahead of them all the way down the windrow—that is, if I can. On they come close at my heels, and amuse themselves not a little when I stick the fork into the ground instead of into the hay. Whew! how hot the sun is! What long rows they are. Never mind! we have turned one. Now for another, then another, and another, till the whole corner of the meadow is upside down.

Then the wagon comes, and the party at the other end of the meadow begin to load. Then comes a lad with pail and basket, and all hands gather round to their tea. Oh! how welcome! One of the men thinks we are going to have a storm, and points to the "bruff" round the sun. Sure enough, there is a broken ring of angry ominous-looking clouds encircling the sun; his face appears dimmed, and a sultriness prevails. The Castellan and I go up to tea at the house, and there a merry romp, and a liberal exhibition of "ride a cock-horse" complete my conquest of the little ones. How they enjoyed it, and how glad they would be to see me again!

Then on the suggestion that a cranberry-pudding would be nice at to-morrow's dinner, the children go away to a patch of unreclaimed ground beyond the burn to gather "cranes," and I soon follow as volunteer. 'Twas as good as play lying on cushiony grass, and plucking the ruddy berries, and our success was a happy demonstration of what can be accomplished by

willingness and emulation. By the time our pail holds enough, the Castellan comes from the meadow, where he has had the hay that could not be carried made up into cocks, and invites me to look at the root-crops on the newly reclaimed ground. Rare fat crops they are, showing how generous this low-lying boggy soil really is; not a stone in it; but good black mould two feet in depth or more. Then we go to the garden, on the slope between the house and the river, and gather a basket full of peas, and dig potatoes, all in readiness for the morrow; and there I saw strawberries and apples, and gooseberries and currants, in abundance. We had to hurry at last, for rain began to fall.

It came down heavier and heavier, so that at bed-time my rush across the courtyard had to be of the most expeditious, and there I was all alone on the visitor's side of the house.

What a night that was! Heavier and heavier fell the rain, till the whole country sent up a sullen roar: the winds howled around the castle; and anon the storm broke forth in fury, and thunder rolled and crashed, shaking the very hills, and for two or three hours the lightning kept up an awful and incessant flashing; and soon, swollen by the mad torrents from the fells, the two rivers rushed down in ungovernable fury, mingling their roar of triumph with the wild uproar overhead, and you might have thought that chaos had come again. What mischief was done, what terror created, the county newspapers of the following week bear full witness. And yet, it was all lost upon me. I knew that it rained when I went to bed, and I saw a flash of lightning while undressing; and after that, deep sleep kept me ignorant of the battle of the elements. I only knew that something unusual had

occured, on awaking at four the next morning, by hearing the Keeldar rushing past with an angry voice, strangely altered from the musical murmur of the evening before. I looked out and saw a deep furious torrent, brown and foamy, hurrying round the hill foot, as if impatient to quench the thirst of the low country.

Church-going is not a weekly observance where the church is nine miles off; so, after breakfast the Castellan invited me to a quiet stroll up Tynedale. Tyne head and Keeldar are not far apart, but the streams run on opposite sides of a great ridge of hills till they meet beneath the castle. The Valley of Tyne is perhaps the more mountainous of the two: we could see Peel Fell rising grandly to a height of 1969 feet, and the range of hills that looks into Liddelsdale. On one of the slopes, a syke—that is a gully—was pointed out to me which there forms the boundary between Scotland and England. Through a pass in those hills runs the road—a good road made at the cost of the late Duke—by which the carriers from Hawick who, as the Castellan says, "used to come stalking over the fells wherever the ground was hard enough," now bring supplies twice a-week to the dwellers in the hill-country. Useful men are those carriers; in them the baker, grocer, the stationer, the hardware and crockery dealer, and not a few others are combined; and one of the two who comes and who makes no haste to be rich, is a man held in esteem by all the dale.

A little above the castle stands a small chapel, in which a preaching is held perhaps once a month; "I have seen the Duke there," said the Castellan; and a little below is a good schoolhouse where instruction is given through the week, and on Sunday afternoons. Two miles upwards, there is a chalybeate spring at the

foot of a slope; and there, up the dale, are the haunts of that mythical personage Brandy Leish, or Lash, as the folk hereabouts have it; and if we were going into Liddelsdale we might visit Hermitage Castle, and see the Cout's grave in the burial ground.

The Border Counties Railway from Hexham to Hawick was planned to pass along this route; but not very soon will the shriek of the whistle be heard in these lonely fells, though when complete the line will effect a great saving in the distance now travelled from Carlisle to Edinburgh. It was for saying something concerning this railway that a certain Carlisle editor received a demonstration from the House of Commons: there are however people living on the spot who say that the demonstration would have been the other way had the House only heard the other side.

The rain had been succeeded by a brisk gale under which the drenched landscape was recovering its ordinary aspect. Long grass lay beaten together in strange confusion; the sheep looked utterly bedraggled and wretched; every hollow was filled by a pool, every path and wheel-track by a torrent, and the Tyne rushed proudly on rejoicing in its strength, a deep stream without a rock or hummock visible between bank and bank. From the fringe of grass and weeds left along the margin we saw that it had been even four feet higher, yet not high enough to flood the meadows or sweep off the hay.

While we walked, I could not help thinking of the smoke, and noise, and restless traffic of the lower course of the Tyne; of the close crowded life of the towns; of the sunless mines; and with a feeling of thankfulness that regions are still left where a man can be quiet, where he can look on the face of Nature, and

breathe the wholesome air that caresses the grass and shakes the tree-tops.

What a happy party we sat down to dinner; the little ones in a state of glad surprise at what I sang and said while they crowded round my knees during the previous half-hour. My ditties and tales, be it observed, were such as were proper for Sunday. And how we enjoyed the fowls and bacon, and the vegetables we had gathered, and that cranberry-pudding, an honest family pudding, that invited the plate up for a second portion.

At three in the afternoon I took my departure, and with abundant reason to be grateful for my reception at Keeldar. The gale still blew; overhead shone a white clouded sky; the road was in excellent condition, and so was I. The road follows the right bank; the first farm shows signs of advancing civilisation, in a flower-garden; ere long the trees multiply; the next farm is embellished with vigorous shrubbery; a little farther and there are plantations, and fields of oats and turnips; and then intervene a mile or two of wild moorland, all heath and bracken, and boulders. Crags appear on the left; and, by-and-by, the church and village of Falstone are seen on the same side—a pretty spot thickly besprinkled with trees. We keep to the right bank, and pass Stannersburn, a hamlet of a few cottages and a garden. Then oaks and wild roses appear, and the road now high, now low, commands fine views of the long straight reach, and ample curves of the swift river. The hills retire to the right and left, and diminish in height, leaving more room for fields and gardens; and the style of the houses improves; ivy and mallows appear, and the road is bordered by hedges; and the diversity is such that Tyne-

dale will leave a cheerful impression on your mind, which is oftentimes preferable to astonishment.

My entertainment at Keeldar had so thoroughly recruited me, that I made but one stage of the nineteen miles to Bellingham, where I found comfortable quarters at the *Furnace Inn*.

CHAPTER XXV.

Bellinjum, and its Neighbourhood—Pleasant Road—Wark—Nunwick—Simonburn—Epitaphs—A large Parish—Mental Culture and Horticulture—The Castle—Foot of North Tyne—A Summary—The Roman Wall—Be ye goin' to dig it up?—An Examination—History and Masonry—Musing on the Wall—The Prophecy—Reminiscences—A lasty Wall—Procolitia—Wild Country—Wallshiels—Sewingshields—Cliffs—Legends—Busy Gap—Rogues and Vagabonds—Agricola and Hadrian—Description—The Castles and Camps—The British Tadmor—Roman Relics—Past and Present.

BELLINJUM, as the natives call it, is a small rustic-looking town, built on the slope of a hill on the left bank of the Tyne. It still retains a few of the old thatched houses, and from the inn you may see the chimneys and great refuse-heap of an iron smelting-furnace, which once kept the place busy and increased its population. But as the landlord tells, the works were stopped nine years ago, and it remains to be seen whether the railway will reopen them. It communicates with Elsdon by a road across the heart of the country, where, if minded to explore, you may trace the course of Watling Street, and journey on to Bremenium and Chevy Chase.

As the bridge is about half a mile above the town, you arrive and depart by the same road. On recrossing I saw that the freshet was well nigh exhausted, but the stream had not yet recovered its summer clearness. Then following on down the right bank, we come presently to a brow, whence the prospect, looking back,

is remarkably pleasing: the town seems to be lying in a deep basin, surrounded by green and wooded slopes, greenest where cultivated, which rise into the dark bare moorlands: the hills that look down on Keeldar are visible in the north, and the river adds the charm which belongs to gleaming curves of running water. Behind Bellingham we see the fells of Redesdale; and nearly opposite where we stand, the Reed mingles its waters with the Tyne.

As we come to the opposite side of the brow, the view opens to the pale blue hills above Allendale, and down the valley to the south, with yet more of the charms of verdure and foliage. Every mile discloses new beauties: now a burn running across the road from a thickly-wooded glen; now the river bank rising steep and picturesque at a noisy bend; now a sylvan hollow where copse, honeysuckle, and wild roses delightfully intermingle; and wheatfields mark our arrival in a region of generous soil and genial climate. And all these charms are heightened by the hilly nature of the landscape.

The village of Wark—not to be confused with Wark on the Tweed—has a thriving appearance; a suspension-bridge spans the river; and there is something characteristic in the signs of the public-houses: *The Highland Drove; The Colt; The Moorcock.* Poor coal is dug here from a hill, entered by a horizontal gallery. A little farther along the pretty road, and we see Chipchase Castle, finely situate on the left bank.

Anon we come to Nunwick, where a road on the right leads to Simonburn, a village worth turning aside for, and but a quarter of an hour distant. A quiet rural spot: a few houses looking across a green; at one side a venerable church, which has touches of ivy,

a bell-gable, and some architectural features of the olden time, to relieve the ugliness of the sash windows. The epitaphs show the skill of the rustic bard, who makes an aged man say :—

> Tired with traveling, through this world of Sin,
> At length I'm come, to Nature's common Inn :
> In this dark place here, for to rest a Night,
> In hopes t'rise, that Christ may give me Light.

In another, an honest couple remind us of their calling in a precept which limps cruelly in its logic :—

> Stop passenger as you go by
> And view those heaps of dust
> While in the publick life we lived
> In God we put our trust
> But why should you lament the loss
> Or morn for us that is gone
> Prepair your self to bear the Cross
> Or here you can not come

Simonburn was once the largest parish in the county, more than thirty miles long, stretching away to Liddelsdale; and the dwellers in the northern part had to content themselves with the most meagre spiritual diet, until a division was made, and a clergyman located at Falstone. Now, the village, though quiet and retired, shows no signs of neglect: it has a new schoolhouse, well-built, and cheerful of aspect; and in the public-house there hangs a list of the *Simonburn Floral and Horticultural Society.*

Follow the lane which leads west from the green for about a mile, you come to a pretty dell, from which a burn dances forth to the sunlight. Beyond rises a steep hill, a grand mass of foliage, so thickly is it overovergrown with ash and beech, up which ascends an inviting path. Go up, and on the top you will see what remains of Simonburn Castle, a relic of one of

the old peel-houses. The northern end still stands, finished above by embrasures and turrets; the portion behind is much dilapidated, nothing left but fragments of walls, a low doorway and vault. The story runs that the ruin is mainly due to the villagers, who, years ago, in the belief that a treasure was buried in the castle, dug up and pulled down in a vain attempt at discovery. There is but little in the relic itself to gratify the lover of the picturesque; but the site, the glimpses of distant landscapes, the gleamy vistas seen between the trees, amply repay the excursion. As if to make the contrast between Past and Present the more complete, a little cottage now stands on the hill-top, and the garden with its few flowers and peas and cabbages touches the very foot of the old wall.

Returned to the high-road, the next rise gives us a prospect over the lower course of the North Tyne; Warden hill is in sight, which we saw on the day of our ramble past the confluence of the two streams near Hexham. Another half hour would bring us to Chollerford, where, if the water were low and clear enough, we might see the remains of the bridge built by the Romans across the river.

I was content to travel over this portion of the ground with my eye, being desirous to see yet more of the western side of the county. I could now picture Northumberland to my mind—its sea-margin, its fertile coast region, its well-tilled midlands, merging into the hills browsed by bleating flocks, and these again into the bleak, boggy fells; the valleys, with their crags and woods and crystal streams; the smoky region, the more than two hundred square miles of coalfield, with its turbulent, money-making industry. Now I found it

easy to comprehend why Northumberland has 450,000 acres of wastes, and fewer parishes and more castles than any other county in the kingdom. Up in Tynedale a single grazing farm would make three or four Norfolk parishes; and how is a churchman to live where people are so much fewer than sheep? I had now fairly looked at the county in its length and breadth, and in what remained to be seen on the way to Carlisle there was enough and more to employ and entertain the few days which I could yet call my own.

Turning, therefore, into the first bye-way on the right, I came in about half-an-hour to a broad road, running east and west up a long hill-side. That is the military road which was made by the government to facilitate the keeping of the country quiet after Prince Charlie's invasion. On the northern bank, masking a couple of cottages, stands Tower Tye, a mass of wall, as it were the side of an old peel, thickly covered with ivy; a pleasing object in the landscape. You would scarcely pass without pausing to look on the clustering foliage, and how much more when you know that here is the line of the Roman Wall.

The Roman Wall; you look round. Where? You see the cross-road, and fields, and trees; but no sign of a wall. Let us go in at the gate, and stand on the bank with our back to the ivy, and look attentively down the slope of the hill. We there see the course of the wall, shown by a broad straight stripe across the wheat-field, of a darker green than the rest. On that stripe stood the wall, accompanied by foss and vallum; and little by little, as our eyes become accustomed to the appearance, we can make out the linefarther off, and note the depression of the foss in the growing crops. And here close in the rear of the cottages we

see a layer of old squared stones peeping through the green mound; one of the courses of the wall. And who can look without emotion on the masonry which was laid, and under such circumstances, sixteen hundred years ago!

A deaf old man, seeing me pacing to and fro, came from one of the cottages, and in reply to my remark, said, "The wall! What d'ye want wi' the wall? There's been more talk than enough about the wall o' late. Be ye goin' to dig it up?"

I showed him a little bit of silver, which dissipated all his misgivings, developed his complacency, and, as it seemed to me, diminished his deafness; for I had not to shout so loud in the rest of our conversation.

Is that all? exclaim some who come hither, and feel disappointed on discovering that they might walk past the place, across the military way, and on to Haydon Bridge or Hexham without knowing that they had trodden the site of the most remarkable memorial left by Rome in her hard-won dependency of Britain. And in truth, save for the ivied wall, there is nothing to attract the eye of one coming along the bye-way. But let us turn our faces towards Carlisle, and ascend the military way for about a furlong, where, having passed a plantation on the right, we can get into a pasture, and see the line of the wall and ditch more distinctly than under the growing crops; and here the foundations of some of the supporting buildings are laid bare. We pace along the low ridge, and see the kine grazing as quietly on this classic ground as in any ordinary meadow, and coming again upon the road by the gate at the farther end, continue up the ascent to the next field, and there rising out of the fresh green wheat, appears the Wall. Yes, there it is, and visibly

enough; the old gray masonry rising amid the weeds and copsewood with which it is overgrown, about four feet in height, and in length some thirty or forty yards, stopping suddenly at a road which crosses it at right angles. From this road I got over the fence for a closer view, and prowled up and down, scanning the weather-beaten faces of the stones as if I expected them to speak, now on one side, now on the other, crossing here and there among the bushes, and pulling away the weeds to get sight of the whole thickness, saw how strongly those builders of the long ago had done their work—a solid face of squared stones on the outside, the same on the inside, and all between filled with rubble, not less solid, for the Romans knew how to make mortar.

Bede was the first to give anything like a description of the wall; "it is," he says, "eight feet in breadth, and twelve in height, in a straight line from east to west, as is still visible to beholders." The height, however, is considered by those competent to judge, to have been eighteen or nineteen feet, including the parapet, which protected the guards stationed thereon; and the breadth, as can still be seen, varies from six to more than nine feet, but for the most part not more than eight. The variations occur on the inside, the outer face having presented an unbroken line to the north, from which the supposition is derived that different parties of labourers were employed at the same time under foremen who for some reason had not agreed upon a uniform thickness. The outside stones present to the eye a thickness of eight or nine inches, a breadth of nearly a foot, and laying bare the upper course of what remains, we see a length of twenty inches, tapering slightly towards the inner end. Thus

more than three feet of the thickness is made up by the hewn stones, imparting so much firmness, that tiles for "bond" are nowhere introduced, as in Roman walls at York, Silchester, and other places. The stone is the ordinary grit and sandstone of the neighbourhood, quarried near the wall wherever found suitable, and from quarries which are still open; but in some instances it was fetched from a distance of eight or nine miles.

After satisfying my curiosity, I found a bower-like opening in the bushes, and sat down on the edge of the wall to muse, while ever and anon the slender sprays and tall grasses touched by the breeze, bent playfully against my cheek, reminding me that Nature in her frailest form is eternal. The springs leap up, and the brooks run and babble in the sunshine as of yore; but where are they who drank thereof? What a contrast between the Rome that was, and the Britain that is! Christianity was but a spark known scarcely beyond the shores of the Mediterranean; the serf and the bondsman had not yet heard the Glad Tidings across the sea. How the sight of those old stones carries us back to the dawn of Christian history! When the legions were here fighting and building, they were within ninety years of the time when the Sermon on the Mount was preached; and but half a century from the death of Paul and the destruction of Jerusalem. Here still prevailed the mysterious rites of the Druids, intermingled with a paganism tinctured with the wild mythology of the north. The prophecy had reached its fulfilment:—

"Then where, o'er two bright havens,
The towers of Corinth frown;
Where the gigantic King of Day
On his own Rhodes looks down;

Where soft Orontes murmurs
  Beneath the laurel shades;
Where Nile reflects the endless length
  Of dark-red colonnades;
Where in the still deep water,
  Sheltered from waves and blasts,
Bristles the dusky forest
  Of Byrsa's thousand masts;
Where fur-clad hunters wander
  Amidst the northern ice;
Where through the sand of morning-land
  The camel bears the spice;
Where Atlas flings his shadow
  Far o'er the western foam,
Shall be great fear on all who hear
  The mighty name of Rome."

The mind becomes interested in thinking of the history of the work. Who were the surveyors that marked out the course, and by how many guards were they attended while traversing the wild and hostile country? Then gangs of labourers appear on the scene many captives, sullen and unwilling, toiling under the eyes of taskmasters; the Roman bands, on the contrary, working cheerily, for their safety depended thereon. Did the villagers of the conquered nation come in groups and look on, hoping for long days of peace and quiet under protection of the wall; and did no soft and timorous eyes learn in time to beam tenderly on the foreign warriors? Some warriors, we may fancy, left their British garrison with regret, while their departure was wept by maidens whose sires had fought fiercely against the Roman.

And when the wall was finished, we can imagine the alerts, the marchings to and fro, the relieving guard, the cries for signals, and rapid transmission of orders. Tradition once told of means for conveying signals, which, had it been true, would have been an anticipation of a modern contrivance; namely, that brass

speaking tubes were laid all along the wall. Drayton says—

> "Towns stood upon my length, where garrisons were laid
> Their limits to defend; and for my greater aid,
> With turrets I was built where sentinels were plac'd
> To watch upon the Pict; so me my makers grac'd
> With hollow pipes of brasse, along me still they went,
> By which they in one fort, still to another sent,
> By speaking in the same, to tell them what to doe,
> And soe from sea to sea could I be whispered through."

There, within a few yards of where we now sit, where the wheat rises and falls in mimic waves, marched the conquerors of the ancient world; now Tungrians, talking perhaps of their home on the Maas, or of that memorable victory over Galgacus, when they led the van; now Batavians, outlandish of speech and heavy of movement; now Moors, their dark skins and flashing eyes a terror to the pale tribes of the north; now Asturian cavalry and footmen, near neighbours of the African, and as passionate and revengeful; now Gauls, Dalmatians, Dacians, Nervii, and Thracians; in short, fighting men from all parts of Europe, subject to one common discipline, and armed with that "stout pilum" which had conquered the world.

But there is no sound now save of the wind and leaves; no living thing in sight from our little bower on the wall; nothing but signs of rural plenty—of the culture which has made our country famous among the nations.

About two miles to the east is the station Cilurnum, now Walwick Chesters, near the North Tyne, and the bridge which the Romans built across the river, and the ancient cemetery. The remains there betoken great strength, and show what care was taken to fortify the wall at the places most liable to attack. Sundry

places hereabouts have Chesters as part of their name, wherein is preserved the English form of castra—camp.

Now I may satisfy my desire of walking along a few miles of the wall; getting over the fences here and there to explore, and keeping to the highway where circumstances compel. A man building a stone fence says, in reply to my remark on the neatness of his work, "Ay, it's weel eneugh; but my wall's no sic a lasty yane as yon," and he points to Carraw, the site of the station Procolitia. Ere long the landscape changes; cultivation is left behind, and a brown heathery region opens, strewn with rocks, and ridgy with lines of hills, where we can walk on the very line of the wall without uncomfortable trespass. We pass Wallshiels, the site of one of the castles, and following the barrier, come by-and-by to Sewingshields, where the basaltic dyke thrusts its black substance above the surface; and we walk along the edge of the cliffs noting with surprise how the wall was built on the very verge, in defiance of irregularities, and although the cliffs might seem to be a good natural defence, the Romans would not forego the additional protection of their artificial barrier. A small plantation on the hill-side as we ascend marks the site of the mile castle; but of the wall itself only a confused line of rubble remains; the facing stones have long been carried off by the builders of the neighbourhood. On the level below, the earthworks of a camp are still visible, about ninety paces square. The scene is bleak, but the elevation is great, and from near the farmhouse we can see Hexham, a gray spot amid a rich green landscape. Northwards the ground lies bare and flat; but it has an interest in having formed part of the property once

rented by a personage of world-wide reputation—the Monkbarns of *The Antiquary*. Here too are legends of King Arthur; how that, as at Richmond, and in the Eildons, the monarch, with his queen and warriors lie asleep in a cave among the crags, waiting for the moment which shall waken them to life, victory, and empire—the shepherd who once found his way in, having failed to break the spell: how that the two sandstone ridges a little to the north are the King's and Queen's crags, for Arthur sat on one and his queen on the other, she combing and dressing her long hair, and, saying something which offended his majesty, he threw a stone at her. She caught it cleverly on her comb, and the stone, which weighs about twenty tons, fell in the hollow between the ledges, where it still lies, scarred by striking the royal comb. A basaltic pillar, about fifty feet high, called Arthur's chair, was thrown down some years ago by reckless villagers, who took laborious pains to perpetrate their wanton mischief.

Going on from Sewingshields we come to Cat Gate, a narrow chasm, where, as is said, the Scots bored a hole under the wall, large enough for a man to creep through; but according to another supposition, it was pierced by the Romans as a sort of sallyport, useful when a reconnaissance was desirable towards the north. In any case, it was by no means an easy outlet. Very different is the opening about a mile farther on, known as Busy-Gap, formed by a depression in the ridge, broad enough for an army to march through, where, feeling the weakness of the position, the Romans raised an earthern rampart on the northern side of the ditch. Now a trackway for cattle runs through it, and it looks peaceable enough; but, as the name Busy indi-

cates, it was a stirring place once, notorious for evil reputation, none more so on all the line of the wall. Here it was that the moss-troopers and border outlaws betook themselves in hot haste from their forays and thieving expeditions, and here their pursuers drew rein dreading the hordes of rogues who lay ever ready to assist the fugitives, and always ready to fight. The Gap was a place shunned by honest men. Camden, during his peregrination, came to Carvorran, but feared to journey farther east, because, as he says, the wall passing certain villages, touched "near to Busy-Gap—a place infamous for thieving and robbing, where stood some castles (chesters they called them), as I have heard, but I could not with safety take the full survey of it, for the rank robbers thereabouts." To denounce a man as a "Busy-Gap rogue" in the settled parts of the county was to constitute him a candidate for imprisonment or the gibbet. And, as before remarked, it was not till the reign of George the Third that a writ could be served north of the Gap.

Rome found her prowess and discipline repelled by obstinate bravery in Britain. Her greatest generals had taken part in the conquest of the island when Agricola landing 133 years after Cæsar, found the north still in arms, and spurning the yoke. In seven years, however, he cleared Bernicia, and drove the tribes to the foot of the Grampians, building forts with masterly judgment to hold them in check, and strengthening his might by attempts at civilisation. In 120 Hadrian followed, and because the barbarians refused to submit, and took every opportunity to annoy their foes, he built a wall all across the island from the Tyne on the east to the Solway on the west—a length of seventy-three and a half miles. A great work truly!

and while the cohorts remained to guard, it answered its purpose, and kept out the Picts and their helpers. But the years went by: the empire weakened at heart recalled her legions, and then, as Gildas relates, the savages "like hungry and ravening wolves, rushing with greedy jaws upon the fold," broke through the wall, and slew and destroyed without mercy, until the Saxons in turn drove them back, and established the kingdom of Northumbria.

Further protection was afforded by a ditch which ran along outside of the wall, forty feet broad in some places as may still be seen, and ten feet deep, maintaining its course alike through beds of hard stone and of soft earth. On the inner side of the wall ran the military way by which communication was kept up from station to station along the whole line: an excellent road constructed as the Romans knew how; still traceable in sheep tracks across the wild country, or hidden by the present military road. A vallum or earthen rampart extended along the southern side of the wall, intended, as is supposed, as a defence against any rebellious outbreak of the conquered natives on the south, while the wall opposed the unconquered on the north. About every four miles there was a station, a camp or castra, twenty-three altogether, of which seventeen were on the wall itself. They comprised from three to six acres, and were each surrounded by a strong stone wall. Then there were what are called mile-castles, seven furlongs apart, forming part of the wall, strongest where it crossed a river or pass in the hills; and between each two of these rose four turrets or watch-towers; hence the wall was a very complete defence against an enemy who could only bring clubs and spears against it. And with posts so near each other

orders could be conveyed along the whole line with unusual rapidity.

The camps were military cities, and though but on a small scale we find in them traces of that which especially marks the Roman occupation—baths and temples —the appliances of cleanliness and worship. As may be supposed, many relics of the garrisons have been dug up: for centuries the whole line of the wall has served as a quarry, and treasury of antiquities. Pottery, metal, altars, sculptures, and coins innumerable now enrich museums and private collections, and not a few are preserved in farm-houses; things once regarded as "witch-stones," now wondered at as old Roman work by milk-maids and hinds.

The site of the mile castles about here is plainly discernible; whether the ground be level or steep, there they are at the same equal distance. We pass smaller gaps, through one of which runs an ancient earthwork —the Black Dike—supposed to have been raised in the Saxon times as a boundary between the kingdoms of Cumbria and Northumbria. A little farther, and crossing a burn we come to what Stukeley calls "the Tadmor of Britain;" the station Borcovicus, now known as Housesteads, a place interesting in itself and for the wide prospect which it commands. Here within an area of nearly five acres are the ruins of a Roman city, of which the like is to be seen nowhere else in Britain. Eight or ten courses of the masonry of the inclosing wall remain in good preservation, and we may see how they curve up to meet the inside of the great wall, and the situation of the four gates, one at each point of the compass, with the guard-rooms of the western gate, where the walls yet stand some feet higher than our head. The southern gate looks im-

pressive in its ruin and like the others shows signs of having been used for defensive purposes long since the time of the original garrison. One of the rooms was converted into a kiln where some borderer dried the grain which he grew or stole. And if we cross to the line of the great wall we see there the northern gate opening towards the quarter whence the danger came. Even in ruin it appears of unusual strength and massiveness, having two passage ways contrived to render entrance difficult to a stranger and an enemy. That it was much used we can still see by the worn condition of the sill, the stone being deeply worn by the tread of numerous feet. The eastern gate shows deeply worn wheel-ruts, and the sight of these evidences of the Past affects the mind deeply: more so at times than imposing relics.

There is something saddening withal in the scene as we stroll across the grass-grown inclosure, tracing the lines of streets, the site of the Mithraic cave, looking at the fragments of masonry, the broken columns, the remains of buildings that denote the ancient importance of Borcovicus. In the centre where the four roads met, lies the base of a square pillar which was doubtless a conspicuous ornament. Near by stood the temple; on the northern side remains part of the walls of a building that was seventy feet long but narrow, the width not more than eight. Here in this wild region was imitated the magnificence that burdened the Seven Hills on the banks of the Tiber. Outside there are traces of considerable suburbs, and of terraces, supposed to have been levelled for cultivation. Now all is lonely, and the only building is a shepherd's cot near the southern gate. Water was supplied by three wells and the burn, all outside the walls.

It is only within the past five or six years that the northern gate has been laid bare, and great attention paid to prevent the remains from falling into further neglect by the care of Mr. Clayton—a name well-known and respected in the region overlooked by Warden Hill. The Duke of Northumberland too, has established a claim to the gratitude of antiquaries, by his publication of the survey of the whole line of the wall, made at his cost by Mr. Maclauchlan.

Housesteads lies on the rise of the ground to the west of the Gap. Farther west the crags reappear, an irregular range in places full three hundred feet high, with the appearance of having been at one time the cliffs of the sea. The wall still runs along their edge, following all the ins and outs and ups and downs, showing in places eight or nine courses of stones; and so it continues passing three or four large lakes, to the end of the crags at Carvorran. It would be an interesting walk; but for the present I am allured in another direction.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Grindon Lough—Looking back at the Wall—Haydon Bridge—Langley Castle—Cartsbog—A rustic Hostelry—Musical Smelters—Stawardle-Peel—Charming Prospect—Glorious Sunshine—Zigzags—The Allen—Whitfield—Blueback—Up to the Moors—Hoot awa' lads!—A Martyr—Haltwhistle—The Wall again—Antediluvian Borings—Water-course for Æsica—Carvorran—The Farmer's Antiques—Greenhead—Thirlwall—The Tipalt—Mumps' Hall—The Irthing—Gilsland—A Glen—The Spa—The Sulphureous Cliff—Reminiscences of Guy Mannering—Scott and his Bride—The Waste—Brampton—Where do you come from?—A Professor.

THE sun was falling towards the west when I turned my back on Housesteads, and descending the great slope, shaped a course across the broad pastures, and by Grindon Lough, for Haydon Bridge—about six miles distant. When I looked back at the bold height of the ridge, extending league after league in irregular line, I was more than ever impressed by the magnitude of the wall. Singularly striking must it have appeared, rising there against the sky, with all its camps, castles, and turrets complete; as much a defence against a foe approaching from the south, as from the north. From that elevation the Romans could overlook half the county.

From the pastures I descended by a lane into the Vale of Tyne, and passed through the town, having planned an excursion into the valley of the Allen, to look at the scenes which I had missed on my entry

into Northumberland. If all go well we shall get another peep at the Wall to-morrow; meanwhile the détour gives good promise of enjoyment.

There was the long steep hill to ascend down which I had walked in the twilight three weeks before: it is getting towards twilight now, but we can see Langley Castle, and the farmer who inhabits it grants ready admittance. One of his lads mounted with me to the roof, from which the form of the building, four massive square towers, connected by the walls of the inner court, is well made out. The inside is bare and empty, and blackened in places by fire. It was built about 1350; belonged once to the Percys; then to the Ratcliffes, and was granted with the other estates of the Earl of Derwentwater to Greenwich Hospital. It was amusing to hear the way in which the lad spoke of the hospital; he might have been a Hindoo talking of John Company; for it was to him a mighty entity. The Hospital took the rents; the Hospital did the repairs; the Hospital sometimes put in drains; the Hospital didn't object to people coming in to see the place, and so forth. And he himself is very willing to show you some of the rooms as you descend the broad winding stair; and the three tiers of arches in the inner wall of the court, which, by the way, are curiously constructed, being open chimney-wise at the back, from the top to the ground.

From the castle a path leads us across fields and through a plantation on the brow of the hill, whence we can look down on the ruin, and the broad Vale of Tyne, and see the sunset twinkling in the distant panes of Haydon Bridge. And beyond, the line of the Wall is within view. A little farther, and I turned to the right at Langley Smelt Mills, along the Alston Road, hoping to

get to Staward-le-Peel before dusk. But the evening deepened, and the small hill-fortress was still half an hour distant when I looked about for a resting-place; and contrary to expectation found quarters in a small public-house that stands by the roadside on a spot named Cartsbog. The hostess looked at me, thought I "looked respectable," and said she would contrive to make me up a bed: no other public-house within miles. Her daughter set cheerfully to work, and ere long my tea was ready, with collops of mutton and good bread and butter, and a pot of jelly; and while I ate the hostess sat and talked, and told me how that she had lived for years on sundry farms in the neighbourhood with her husband, doing pretty well; but as their family grew up thought they would like to try to better themselves, and so took the public-house, and rented a field or two adjoining. She hoped it would answer; they had not had much experience of taking in lodgers; but didn't like to turn away a respectable person, that is, if they could only make him comfortable. Her husband worked very hard, poor man, and tended his own fields when he came in from his day's work. "That's him there a-mowing: he mows a bit every evening, and I help the children turn it over and make the hay o' day-times. Their customers were mostly miners and men from the lead-works: a rough lot some of 'em; but some civil enough, and it was surprising to hear how sensible they could sit and talk, and sing too; some of 'em were beautiful singers, and they had a band o' music and practised regular."

In return I told her of what befel me at Allentown on the day of Stagshaw Bank Fair, and thereby surprised the good woman not a little. What could the people mean? turning away a respectable person from

their houses as if he was a thief. Never heard of such a thing! Why, she was sure, there was many a cottage where the poor folk would have taken me in if they had only known. She had not ceased her criticisms when her husband came in wiping his brow, and sat down to his pipe, and she told the story over again to him. He couldn't make it out; anyhow he wished he hadn't got to go and dig a drain the next day, he'd have shown me the nighest way to Haltwhistle through the woods.

The contrivance for my bed was satisfactory—clean sheets and a room to myself, though doubtless at the cost of overcrowding to the children somewhere else. I was up early the next morning; but the man had already gone away to his work. While the lassie served breakfast she talked about the Peel, telling me the best way of approaching it, expressing at the same time her regret that I did not know all the bye-paths, for in them was half the pleasure. Moreover there was a spring of water like that at Gilsland, not at all easy to discover by a stranger. I proposed that she should accompany me as guide, to which after a little persuasion she consented. A few minutes sufficed for preparation, she had only to put on her bonnet and get her parasol; and off we set along the road. Presently we saw on the right the broad curving fringe of trees that borders the course of the Allen, and among them on a height the tower of the Peel; and after a while, turning into a path across the pasture, we descended the rough steep slope under the trees to the brink of the river. Here the scenery is delightfully romantic, with crags, foliage, and running water: and now I understand why Staward-le-Peel is famed in all the country round, even as far as Newcastle, as a resort for picnic parties. The water makes a cheerful noise,

imparting a sense of coolness as it flows past in its stony bed, and many a green retreat is to be found floored by soft turf and backed by mossy rocks. The spring lies in a rocky basin near the edge of the stream, throwing up from time to time a few bubbles of gas. As these burst they diffuse a perceptible odour of sulphur, and the water is similar in flavour, sickly and disagreeable. Here and there a thin grayish slimy deposit clings to the bottom of the basin, impregnated with the same odour. When we come to Gilsland, we shall there find the like kind of water, strong enough in quality and flavour to attract numerous invalids in search of health.

After we had rambled by the river, the lassie found a narrow path which, overhung by the trees, zigzags up the hill to the Peel, now among roots and rocks, where ferns grow thickly, now up steep slopes where the foothold is precarious. She had seen it crowded with young men and maidens, she said, when the teetotallers came there for a holiday, and all about the woods resounded with cheerful voices and merry laughter. At length, after many ins and outs, we saw clear sky overhead, and passing a bit of old wall, came out on a small grassy level above the trees. The view takes you by surprise. It is charming. We stand, as it were, on a lofty promontory, which juts boldly into the vale of Allen, compelling the river to a swift curve, and offers a clear prospect into what, by the curve, becomes a magnificent amphitheatre. The banks, high and precipitous, are thickly wooded; hence the slopes are diversified by foliage, contrasting the more effectively with upheaving crags and patches of cultivation. The river is seen flashing and foaming far below, and here and there the narrowing vistas appear as fairy-like glens.

By-and-by the things close at hand claim attention, and then you find that unconsciously you have scrambled to the top of the old wall to get a clear outlook. Then you see how well the site was chosen for defence; how hard it must have been to compel the resolute kerl who had shut himself up therein, to unbar the gate against his will. The building appears to have covered the whole of the summit: a parallelogram of which at one end the wall remains about ten feet, at the other about thirty feet in height. Grasses and shrubs grow here and there from the crevices, and in one place a small ash rises aloft as a light green banner. But it is the view, not the fragmentary remnant of the Peel, that invites attention, although the latter, if endowed with speech, could doubtless tell us many a tale of Border feud and frolic. The grassy level is commonly the dining-room of the holiday-folk, and it hears more hilarity now than perhaps it did when covered by a roof. But little groups of friends come hither as well as crowds; groups who have an eye for the beautiful, who can sit and look for hours on the scene below, and share their emotions rather by sympathy than words.

Along the edge of the wood, where we found wild strawberries, we returned to the pasture, and so to the road; and there we shook hands, and parted. The lassie said she must hasten back to her household duties to make up for lost time, yet could not help wishing she were going with me to ramble along Walltown Crags. She had been there once, as well as to Gilsland; and thought there could not be finer scenery anywhere than on the Crags. And so, with many thanks on my part for her willing friendliness, we parted.

What a hot morning it was! even the breeze fell

languid. But is not sunshine something to rejoice at, as it pours down a flood of intense brilliance upon the landscape! How the woods and fields seem to open their bosoms to the quickening glow! And if you wish to loiter, as may be you will, there is nothing, not even a shiver, to mar the luxury of repose, or to deaden the sense of fulness of life which exults within you. No wonder that there have been, and still are, Sun-worshippers!

The road maintains its elevation for about a mile farther, then with a sudden bend to the right, it zig-zags down a precipitous hillside—Cupola Bank, as the natives call it—where thick growing trees and tall cliffs invest every turn with pleasurable surprise. Within the space of a furlong the road falls perhaps 300 feet. The East and West Allen here unite, and flow in one stream, which is crossed at the foot by Cupola Bridge, a substantial structure of stone. Now the road continues up the left bank of the river, along fertile levels of the Vale of Whitfield, bordered by richly wooded heights, and an excellent road it is; as is the case, however, throughout the Alston district. About three miles more and we come to the pleasantly-situate village of Whitfield, where stands *Blueback*, an inn well known in all the mining country. I have made many inquiries to discover the origin of the curious name, but in vain; but I found that the ale was good, and considering that there is no house of entertainment by the route we are going between this and Haltwhistle, a good lunch is not to be slighted.

Then retracing our steps for a few yards we ascend the road that slants up the hill on the left of the vale, and have the advantage of a succession of pleasing views as the elevation increases. Some distance up

stands the church in a position which, however much it may try the constancy of the dwellers in the valley, rewards them with a rich prospect. Ivy enwraps the walls, roses grow under the chancel windows, an old stone coffin lies by the door, a sun-dial exhibits its ever-moving shadow, and an epitaph records thus of Rachel Reed :—

> She was—but words are wanting to say what ;
> Think what a Wife should be—and she was that.

Still higher mounts the way to a crossroad, on a wide, dreary moorland, where, obedient to advice, we turn to the left. What a contrast between this and the green umbrageous valley we have left behind! Never mind! our eyes range freely, and we enjoy a breeze—a living breeze. About half a mile onwards, a gate in the stone fence on the right warns us to make another turn ; so passing through, we enter upon a still drearier moorland, and trudge across the trackless surface in a north-westerly direction. 'Tis weary work. Never mind! the breeze blows, and the sun shines, and we find here and there little grooves of green turf, in which the footing is easier. In the distance stands up black and solitary the chimney of a coal-pit engine. That is our landmark. By-and-by we pass it, and begin to have glimpses of the vale of South Tyne; but all around us is still desolate and solitary. Then the ground falls away in a long slope, and a turfy track facilitates progress, and sheep are grazing on the open patches among the tough coarse heath. Then from the brow of a succeeding slope, we see the whole breadth of the vale, and Haltwhistle lying on the farther shore of the river, about three miles distant, backed by the crags on which we shall set foot ere the

day be many hours older. The spot offered an invitation to rest, and I accepted it.

We are nearing the classic ground once more, and though the fells be wild, there are footprints of history scattered about them. Away on our left, on the bend of the river above the town, stand the castles of Featherstonhaugh and Bellister; away on the right, below, the town, the tower of Willimoteswick looks upon the stream, and recalls to memory the song which deceived even the Wizard by its rude but vigorous humour.

> "Hoot awa', lads, hoot awa',
> Ha' ye heard how the Ridleys, and Thirwalls, and a'
> Ha' set upon Albany Featherstonhaugh
> And taken his life at the Deadmanshaugh?
> There was Willimoteswick,
> And Hard-riding Dick,
> And Hughie of Hawden, and Will of the Wa'.
> I canno' tell a', I canno' tell a',
> And mony a mair that the deil may knaw."

and more, as may be read in the Notes to *Marmion*. The names all refer to places in the neighbourhood which are easily identified.

And a still higher interest attaches to that house of Willimoteswick: it is said to be the birthplace of Nicholas Ridley, who was burnt at Oxford three hundred years ago in company with Latimer for the glory of Papistry; and the vindication of a man's right to think for himself in matters religious.

We resume our walk in thoughtful mood. The track becomes rough and sandy in places, dips into little glen-like hollows, where ling and bracken intermingle in luxuriant growth, and bare escarpments throw in rich touches of colour. A burn accompanies us, leaping here and there in sprightly cascades, and

forming little pools, around which the grasses grow tall and thick, as if for the pleasure of beholding their reflection. At one of these pools, overshadowed by a tree, and a big stone lying convenient, I sat down and took a footbath—one of the wayfarer's enjoyments.

At length we leave the moorlands for a road between cultivated fields, which leads us to the wooden bridge across the river. The bridge of the branch railway to Alston, with its five stone arches a little below, is an effective object in the view. And here is Haltwhistle, a town in which the rude features of olden time are curiously intermingled with modern improvements. Here and there a good house, then queer little cottages crowding in. The surgeon even lives under a thatched roof. There are fifteen hundred inhabitants, yet no regular baker among them. Most of them make their own bread, says the hostess of the *Crown*, while I drink a glass of bitter ale, or else buy the "steam-bread" which is sent along the railway from Carr's at Carlisle. So the primitive custom is still vigorous.

After a walk through the town, I took a path running northwards, on my way to the Crags. "Where was you going tiv?" said a woman, to whom I addressed an inquiry. Informed on this point, she answered, "Ye'll coom to a loan end: ye divvent tak' that, but gang on to t' next;" treating me to a farewell touch of Northumbrian dialect. Ere long the Crags rise full before us, and we tramp straight towards them as the ground permits. Once on the summit, we find ourselves on that same bold irregular line of cliffs facing the north, which we left yesterday at Borcovicus. There is the same wild open view towards the Border, with pastures in the foreground, and naked heights in the distance. And here once more the course of the

Wall is traceable; and if not satisfied with Housesteads, there is the tenth station—Æsica, or Great Chesters, within reach, or Vindolana, with its ancient milestone; or it may be that you will find a greater attraction in rambling about the crags, exploring their picturesque nooks and rugged buttresses. Crags are a characteristic of the region for miles around; a walk across to Liddelsdale would bring us to Christenbury Crags, rising grimly from the heathery waste, a haunt of foxes. Hard-headed Dandie Dinmont once fell over those crags, and, as he tells us, was not even confused by the fall. Heads are not so hard now-a-days. Southwards the view embraces a wide extent of the vale, and we can see far enough to form a notion of the dimensions of the triangle described in our excursion since yesterday.

On Haltwhistle Common slabs of micaceous sandstone have been found in a quarry containing specimens of those curious fossils long believed to be worm-casts, or rather tubes made by worms. Similar examples have been found in the same kind of formation in Wensleydale, and other parts of Yorkshire. But Mr. Hancock shows good reason for their recognition as the runs or borings, in a fossilised condition, of the small crustaceans, such as we saw newly-formed on the sea-sands. If so, what an idea is thereby suggested of a remote time when that quarry was a seashore, washed by the tides; and of mighty changes and upheavals in an era to which the date of the Roman Wall is but as yesterday.

Dr. Bruce has very ably drawn attention to the fact that Æsica was supplied with water by a water-course skilfully excavated, so as to preserve the levels along the uneven ground, from the burn flowing out of

Greenlee-lough to the station. In a direct line the distance is somewhat more than two miles, but from the necessity of preserving the levels along the uneven ground, the whole length is six miles. The greater part of its course is still traceable.

Proceeding westwards we come to a succession of breaks in the crags, known as the Nine Nicks of Thirlwall, where scrubby trees give variety to the scene below, and portions of the wall remain of such a height, eight or ten courses of stones, as to renew our admiration. What with the antiquity, the natural features, the traditions of the place; the well assigned by some to King Arthur, by others said to be the spring in which King Egfrid was baptised by Paulinus, our ramble on the crags leaves us in good humour with those to whom it is a favourite resort:—that is, while they perpetrate no mischief. And when, coming to Carvorran, we descend the last slope of the crags, we have none but pleasing impressions.

Here we are on the site of another station, for Carvorran is the ancient Magna. It did not touch upon the great Wall, as that at Housesteads, but lay a few yards away on the south, and now from frequent ploughing, the site is well nigh worn out. But part of the rampart remains on the north, and upon it there lie a few stones, shaped with mouldings and plinths: "Not worth carrying away," said the farmer, who was at his gate, and expressed himself willing to let me see what was to be seen. "'Twasn't much, and for his part he wondered what people could find in them old broken things to look at. They used to come trampling over his fields just as if the place was their own, and he wasn't sorry when 'twas all ploughed up." He showed me an altar which now stands in the

kitchen: another, quite blank, is built into the outer wall; and in one corner of the garden are heaped a few fragments of carvings, and of red pottery. The Maiden Way, that ancient road which stretched from Yorkshire into Scotland, passed through the station; and from inscriptions which have been dug up hereabouts, it is conjectured that Magna was once garrisoned by the Dumnonii, a Celtic tribe, natives of Devon and Cornwall, who, subject to Rome in the south, were employed by their masters in reducing the north to subjection.

From the orchard a footpath leads down the steep hill-side to the village of Greenhead, and the valley watered by the Tipalt. Blenkinsop Castle, an old Border fortress, stands a short distance down the stream round the bend of the hill; and on our right, within a few minutes' walk, is Thirwall Castle, a dull-looking ruin: a square tower with thick walls, gloomy and damp inside, and overgrown in places with weeds and lichens. It is, nevertheless, memorable as the place where Edward the First lodged, September 20th, 1306, when on his way from Haltwhistle to Lanercost. Its name is said to be derived from the Scots having *thirled*, that is, pierced or broken through the wall in the neighbourhood, to facilitate their predacious inroads.

"After all," says Sir John Clerk, "I cannot but take notice of two things with regard to this Wall, that have given me great matter of speculation. The first is, why it was made at all, for it could never be a proper defence, and, perhaps, at Boulness less than any other place, since our barbarian forefathers, on the north side, could pass over at low water, or, if the sea was then higher or deeper than it is now, could make

their attacks from the north-east side by land. The second is, why the Scots historians, vain enough by nature, have not taken more pains to describe this wall, a performance which did their ancestors more honour than all the trifling stories put together, which they have transmitted to us. 'Tis true, the Romans walled out humanity from them; but 'tis as certain they thought the Caledonians a very formidable people, when they, at so much labour and cost, built this wall, or before they had made a vallum between Forth and Clyde."

The Romans must, nevertheless, have had great confidence in their rampart, for they constructed a wall of earth and stakes all across Germany, from the Danube to the Rhine. As Mr. James Yates has recently shown in an interesting description, it is still traceable across Wurtemburg, Baden, part of Bavaria, along the Taunus mountains, and thence westward, till it strikes the river at Deutz.

Four miles along the right bank of the Tipalt bring us to a district, which looks warm and wooded in contrast with that we have left. Near Rose Hill station, we pass a few rustic houses, some of which exhibit a readiness to entertain visitors and picnic parties. Here modern circumstances share with ancient Rome to create classic ground. Here we are on the edge of that dreary waste which stretches away to Liddelsdale, where Dandie Dinmont was set upon by robbers; and the last house of the group, standing at the bend of the road, is Mumps' Hall, where Dandie tarried to allay his thirst, and told the news of Ellangowan's death to Meg Merrilies.

Northumberland is left behind, and following the road, we presently cross the Irthing, a brisk shallow

stream. Then a little church, newly built, appears on the right, and the road, always rising, opens out on the hill-side and overlooks the valley. The view struck me as wanting in cheerfulness. That white building before us at the bend is the Shaws hotel, the head-quarters of visitors to Gilsland Spa. It stands in a commanding position, with a prospect down the vale. I met groups taking a quiet walk to energise the effect of their afternoon dose at the spring.

Immediately round the hotel the ground is laid out to make it convenient for exercise, and a broad path zigzags steeply down into the thick wood which clothes the precipitous banks of the river. The sudden bend leads into a gorge, a rocky glen, thick with foliage, and seats are placed here and there as resting-places at the best points of view. At length we descend to the level of the stream, where the path skirts the base of a lofty cliff, washed on its outer margin by the Irthing. Here stalls, for the sale of knickknacks and curiosities, are erected against the rock,—the baths are established in a long, low building, in the shed style of architecture, which encroaches on the bed of the stream. Beyond this the path ends suddenly, the cliff rises sheer from the river, and here at its base is the medicinal spring which makes the reputation of Gilsland Spa. The water flows, a constant stream, into a small basin, bubbling with the sulphuretted gas, the odour of which is distinctly perceptible as you approach. It looks clear and bright enough to tempt you to drink from the goblet which stands ready, but a few sips are quite enough for one who does not feel called on to drink as a duty. The water is not aperient, and is said to be beneficial in restoring "tone" to a jaded stomach. About a score of patients—if such they could be called,

apparently of the working-class, were leaning against the fence which separates the path from the river, some taking a drink at times, and all looking as if time hung very heavy on their hands.

The cliff is an interesting mass of rock, mostly dark gray in colour, stained in places with oozings of sulphur, yellowish-white, showing black stratifications, and shutting in the stream with a formidable barrier. Immediately opposite, approached by a row of stepping-stones, lies a low meadow, patched with wood. Altogether it is a place which should have constant sunshine. Some visitors complain of want of room; they dislike the stepping-stones, and wish that the path could be extended to make the waterfall accessible: for once rise out of the valley and you are on the cheerless waste; and the waste, however much an open breezy expanse may exhilarate one in health during a ramble, repels an invalid who sees it every day for a week. It would perhaps tend to the advantage of Gilsland were the valley of the Irthing both above and below made easy to the foot of tender folk. For one who can rough it, the walk from Gilsland to Naworth along the top of the bank offers a rich reward in romantic scenery. While loitering under the cliff you will perhaps remember that Miss Margaret Bertram of Singleside was advised to betake herself hither, and how that at the Spaw-well below the crag at Gilsland she saw the gipsy wife, "a muckle sture, fearsome wife" to look on.

And now Abbotsford recurs to mind, for here it was that Scott, in the summer of 1797, being then in his twenty-sixth year, met Miss Carpenter, and commenced the acquaintance which ended in his marriage with the fascinating maiden. In company with his brother and

a friend he had visited the Lake country, viewing scenes and characters, and gathering incidents which afterwards enriched his poems and romances, and was sojourning at Gilsland when the lady described as "a form that was fashioned as light as a fay's; with a complexion of the clearest and lightest olive; eyes large, deep-set, and dazzling, of the finest Italian brown; and a profusion of silken tresses, black as the raven's wing," passed him on horseback. They were married the following December in St. Mary's church at Carlisle.

If, instead of descending to the Spa, we continue along the high ground above the right bank, the scene soon changes, and we come to the waste, a dreary brown expanse, contrasting strangely with the abundant foliage of the valley. It is a region to walk across on a bright sunshiny day, when the solitude of vastness might be enjoyed, and be found perhaps more impressive than the enshrouding solitude of a forest. One can hardly help pitying the folk who live at Bewcastle, a village situate miles apart in the waste, as an oasis in the desert, though hardly an oasis of verdure. Do they really share in the postal service, and receive letters and newspapers? And who would think that our forefathers could have quarrelled for centuries over the debateable land in a region like this, so uninviting; fit only as a place of banishment!

There is a mineral spring not far from the crag, the water of which, as a man told me, "when mixed with the spa-water, turns it as black as ink." Observers have remarked that the whole mass of the cliff appears to be saturated with sulphuric oozings, which may probably be due to the presence of this upper spring.

There seemed to me something Tyrolese in the view as I walked back after sunset to Rose-Hill station; that is, a sombreness which some of the valleys in Tyrol exhibit. When the last train came up, I journeyed seven miles farther to Brampton. The station (Milton) is some distance from the town, and for threepence you are conveyed by a carriage on branch line. A horse pulls for a distance, then the horse is taken off, and the carriage runs of itself; then you alight at a place which has no platform, nothing but rails, and wagons, and ground. It was dark: "that's the way to the town," said the man; I was the only passenger, yet found my way to the *Howard Arms*, and asked for a bed.

"Where do you come from?" inquired the landlady.

"Does that matter?" I answered with a smile. She said nothing, but opened the door of the Commercial Room.

I was eating my supper when two guests entered, one of whom proved to be a learned professor whom I knew in London; and to meet thus unexpectedly in a remote northern town was a surprise to both of us. We had a talk together before going to bed, and he promised to walk with me on the morrow to Naworth and Lanercost, and give me a glimpse of society in Brampton.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Brampton—Dying a Fair Death—A Delightful Play-ground—A Reason for Sobriety—Naworth—Belted Will's Gallows—The Castle—The Warden's Chambers—A Raid—Pleasant Walks—Lanercost—A Picturesque Ruin—Valley of the Gelt—The Inscribed Rock—The Helbeck—Talkin Tarn—Warwick Bridge—The Eden—Wetherall—View from a Viaduct—Corby Castle—Carlisle—A Barrister's Rhyme—The Cathedral—The Castle—Stanwix.

BRAMPTON being the capital of a barony, where the Earl of Carlisle holds his courts, and gives a yearly feast, inviting whomsoever he will among the three thousand inhabitants, is a place of some pretence, as manifest by a few stylish houses and smooth red brick among the old weather-beaten stone and rough-cast walls which maintain the rustic character. The old Moot Hall is gone from the market-place; but the Moot Hill still remains on the edge of the town, easy of access, and as favourable for a view as a church tower. After all it is a very rustic capital: you see women fetching buckets of water; and, if it be market-day as at the time of my stroll, not a few of Old Homespun's descendants driving in with their clumsy carts. They enjoy, I am told, a reputation for hospitality, and a wholesome dread of physic, "Did he dee his ain fair deeth, or did he hae the doctor?" is the remark with which some of them receive news of a neighbour's decease.

The Professor kept his word; and the next morning

took me to a house standing on a pleasant rise at the edge of the town, where a few minutes made me aware that the duties of schoolmaster and magistrate can be worthily combined. When I saw the generous diet, the playground, with its means and appliances for gymnastic feats, and the wide open prospect it commands, bounded by the hills of Dumfriesshire, on one of which Malcolm's monument is discernible, I almost wished to be a boy once more. It would be so delightful to play in such a playground as that!

Ere long we started on our walk. The neighbourhood of the town is remarkable for low rounded eminences of sandy formation, highly favourable to the growth of potatoes. The road is paved for a short distance on the skirts of the town, and thereby hangs a tale. A farmer well known for his love of good liquor was accosted by an acquaintance—"Ye've no been drunk on the road lately, Jamie."

"Na," answered Jamie, "the road's na been sa saft to fall on sin' they paved it."

Ere long we started on our walk, and met rustic lads and lasses, and carts, and now and then even a gig hastening to market; and in less than an hour came to Naworth. The gradual rise up which we have walked reaches its summit at the uplands of the park, and the view all across the country to Scotland is seen to perfection. A troop of workmen were busy, some painting the gates, others clipping the edges of the road and paths; a sign that "my Lord" was expected. A noble oak which stretches its branches far around is pointed out as the "gallows tree" on which Belted Will used to hang border thieves with but a short shrift, and without benefit of trial by jury. It is a magnificent tree, and the huge branch which stretches across the walk, a

tree of itself, looks as if it must have been the one where the Liddelsdale rogues met their doom. According to Sir David Lindsay their last dying speech was :—

> "Adieu, my brother Annan theeves
> That helped me in my mischieves;
> Adieu, Crossars, Nicksons, and Bells,
> Oft have we fared through the fells.
> * * *
> With King correction be ye fangit,
> Believe right sure ye will be hangit."

A little farther and we come to the castle, which is not all ancient, for the fire in 1844 destroyed a considerable portion; but the restorations by Mr. Salvin preserve the character of the former edifice while adding greatly to convenience. The first impression is favourable; an ivied wall: a gateway with the motto carved above: Fort en Loyalté, and towers rising behind. The gateway opens into a paved inner court, at one corner of which are the steps leading to the great hall, where visitors are admitted. It is a spacious room, with timbered roof, mullioned windows, family portraits round the walls, and a huge fire-place with a Scriptural motto on the arch. There are suits of armour, and effigies of the crests of the house of Howard, a deer, and a bull rampant holding banners, and a great fish, which we might fancy to be a spoil from the temple of Dagon, and a screen at upper end near the dais. There is a visitors' book; and looking over a few pages, you will see a remarkable number of names from the United States. It is the showy part of the building; all the rest is quiet elegance; and must be more comfortable than what Pennant saw. "The whole house," he says, "is a true specimen of ancient inconvenience, of magnificence and littleness, the rooms

numerous, accessible by sixteen staircases, with most frequent and sudden ascents and descents into the bargain." There is quite enough of the old left to confirm the antiquary's description; as we see when mounting the tower to Belted Will's apartments. We climb a narrrow stair to two or three small rooms in which the resolute Warden dwelt, a few books his only companions, and with nothing else to solace him for the fatigues of office. Having his library, chapel, and sleeping-room, he found wherewith to satisfy his thought when not engaged in active duties. Fortunately the tower and his books escaped the flames: the books are old manuscripts, one of which contains the legend of Joseph of Arimathea, on three large leaves of vellum, within a wooden cover. And when he shut himself up to meditate, he was brave who dared disturb him. As the oft-told story runs—"Hang the fellow," he cried, intending nothing more than an angry exclamation at the intruder, when one day a retainer burst in with news of the capture of a prisoner. But it was otherwise interpreted; and some hours afterwards, on ordering that the moss-trooper should be brought before him, the answer was that the unlucky captive had been really hanged. A nobleman who could content himself with such a lodging, must have had something monkish in his disposition. Yet what says the minstrel of the Warden in the field?—

"Belted Will Howard is marching here,
And hot Lord Dacre with many a spear,
And all the German hackbut-men
Who have long lain at Askerten:
They cross'd the Liddel at curfew-hour,
And burn'd my little lonely tower:
The fiend receive their souls therefor:
It had not been burnt this year and more."

The tower stands on a tongue of land, round which the Irthing makes a quick bend; and a very pretty view there is from the window. You look down upon the Irthing running cheerfully below, bordered by tall trees. We could not see the books, because of some setting to rights, which, as our guide said, was not yet completed. I wished to go out on the roof, but was told there was no way up.

The walks along the banks of the river are delightful; the paths wind among trees and rocks bordered by ferns and mosses overhung by foliage, and the music of running water mingles with that of the leaves. We followed the paths to their outlet, and, on emerging by the bridge saw Lanercost Priory in the meadow beyond. A little farther, and we are at the old arched gateway, through which the view of the ruin is so striking, the west front as a picture set in a framework, that you pause for awhile in the road to gaze thereon. And while crossing the level meadow within, there is time to note the picturesque features, and admire the work of the "dark ages." The offices are now fitted and occupied as a farmhouse, and the nave is repaired and used as a church; but having passed through, we tread upon the soft green turf, amid columns and arches, and tombs, on which are carved the arms of the Dacres and other lordly possessors. And while your eye roves from arch to arch, and moulding to moulding, finding here and there some grace to linger on, it is refreshed by the sight of trailing weeds, brambles, and shrubs, and masses of ivy that beautify the crumbling masonry. And there are stairs by which you can mount to the galleries, and pass round the choir, and into the transept, and look down from one elevation after another, upon the

landscape, and the numerous tombs in the adjoining churchyard.

An inscription in the nave records the date of erection in 1116, by Robert de Vallibus, one of the powerful lords of Gilsland. It was a monastery of Augustine monks. Among memorable incidents in its history are the visits of Edward the First. On three occasions did the monarch share the hospitality of the monks, lying here all one winter in failing health. After his death, his former foe, Robert Bruce, stayed here three days during one of his inroads into England.

Naworth and Lanercost attract numerous visitors; and the little inn near the bridge is at times over-tasked with carriages. Two arrived while we were there, and while the ladies and gentlemen walked to the ruin, the footmen laid a cloth on the grass near the river side, and made ready all the appliances of an agreeable picnic. Few places yield so enjoyable an excursion.

We returned by field-paths to Brampton, and in the evening, after a dispensation of Cumbrian hospitality, we took another walk—up the valley of the Gelt, a small stream that falls into the Irthing. Narrow, and shut in by cliffs of dark red sandstone, crowded with trees and a tangle of weeds and brambles, it has all the charm of a dell. The little river here and there lifts up its voice, and takes a cheerful part in creation's never-ending psalm. As the path winds hither and thither, cheating the way with diversity, and your eye catches the touches of red among the crowding verdure, you will perhaps wonder that so lovely a spot should be found in so naked a region. For the heights above are but the fringe of wild and dreary fells, that stretch

away for miles, inviting only to the sportsman, who there finds wild fowl abundant in the season. The valley of the Gelt may be regarded as a gem in a poor setting. It is explorable for six miles, with a change in the character of the scenery, as in the last three the sandstone is succeeded by limestone, and that again by grit.

There is something besides Nature to interest you. In the cliff on the left bank, an obscure inscription traceable in the stone, is ascribed by antiquaries to the Romans. It is at a considerable distance above the water, and, as usual, is outflanked by cuttings and chisellings made by foolish prowlers. Are you curious to know what the legionaries could have had to record in such a spot, to create what has been long known as the Written Rock? The purport is thus given by the learned: "The vexillarii of the second legion under an optio called Agricola, were, in the consulship of Flavius Aper and Albinus Maximus (A. D. 207), employed to hew stone here for the Romans." From which we may suppose that here were hewn some of the blocks for the great Wall.

Farther up, on the right bank, we cross Helbeck, a little brook which descends from the fields above, where the fierce battle was fought in 1570 between Queen Elizabeth's troops under Lord Hunsdon, and the small army commanded by Leonard Dacre, one of Queen Mary's champions. Here again we have the tradition that the brook ran with blood for three days and three nights.

We followed the valley about three miles to the railway bridge, a lofty arch, remarkable as one of the first of skew arches; built when such a structure was a greater mechanical feat than it is in the present day.

Then we left the valley, and turned northwards to the open country, and came ere long to the skirts of the fells, and to Talkin Tarn, a considerable lake lying in a broad hollow. To the Bramptonians it affords opportunity for pleasurable recreation, fishing and rowing, and the boathouse which stands upon the margin contains the means and appliances.

In order to see somewhat of the country between Brampton and Carlisle, I started the next morning for another walk, again with a companion. We rambled through Hayton to Warwick Bridge, a well-cultivated region, with trees enough for shade and beauty. At the bridge we come to the Eden, now a bright broad river: on one side lies Edenholme, on the other Warwick Hall, two seats with a prospect over a pleasant landscape. There are signs about the little village of the vicinity of a large town: it was once the site of a Roman station, now it boasts a Reading Room, and the spire of the church rising gracefully among the trees, reminds us of peaceful ages and purity of worship. Another half-hour, and we come to Wetherall, a village with a green, and houses with pretty gardens, a fragment of an old priory, and a church, famed in the neighbourhood for its sculptured monuments to members of the Howard family, one of which is said to be Nollekens' best; and a vault beneath, into which you can peep through a grating. There is, I am told, somewhere in the churchyard an epitaph nearly a hundred years old, on a youth, which runs as follows :—

In this vain world short was my stay,
  And empty was my laughter;
I go before and lead the way,
  And thou comes jogging after.

The view from the railway-bridge at Wetherall is wide and beautiful; sufficient in itself to attract visitors. The arches rise high above the river, and command miles of the valley of the Eden, woods, fields, and meadows—a vast expanse. Having crossed the bridge, a short distance brings us to Corby Castle, the seat of the Howards, which, whatever it may have been, no longer resembles a castle. Its situation is delightful, on the brink of the steep bank, down which we descend by paths to a terrace of greensward that stretches for nearly half a mile along the edge of the stream, sheltered by stately trees. The river forms a rapid, tumbles over a dam, and hurries past with a lively roar; and to sit in the temple at the end, and look along the green vista, bordered by the flashing water, is a treat. On the opposite bank rises a precipitous cliff, thickly overgrown with wood, in which are some ancient excavations, said to be a hermitage, or caves that served as refuge in troublous times. But the terrace itself is the charm: a natural ledge, at the foot of the high steep bank; and this, with its tangle, and ferns, and weeds, is a pretty finish. Near the house the masonry, for a cascade, is seen stretching from top to bottom of the bank, and a temple, and stair hewn from the rock, and a few statues which call for no special remark. It is easy to see, that the more Nature has been permitted to have her own way, the better for the landscape.

We once more enjoyed the view on recrossing the bridge, and then I took the train for the last four miles to Carlisle. I had not before seen the county town, and was somewhat disappointed to find its appearance more that of a southern than a northern town, exhibiting more of rusty red brick than stone.

I was soon on the top of the cathedral tower, surveying the wide-spread landscape. The hills are distant, and for a considerable space round the city the ground is comparatively level. The Eden winds along through broad meadows, and looking to the north-west we can see a small yellow stripe, which the sexton says is a glimpse of the Solway Sands. Beyond the bridge the bank is steep, crowned by the village or suburb of Stanwix—one of the Roman stations; thither came the wall, and passing thence, ended at Browness, on that low shore which, by a little pains, we again discover. We can see some portion of the city wall, which did not keep the Pretender out, and we look down on the castle, a famous border fortress, and can note all the goings to and fro of the place—the sentries at their posts, the movement in the streets—people walking in the meadows, and boats on the river. And the tall chimneys of bakeries and spinneries mix up manufactures with the pastoral and agricultural character of the landscape.

This, then, is the "merry Carlisle" of the rhymers, whose ballads invest the old city with a romantic interest. Here King Arthur held his court, and the knights and ladies that surrounded the monarch wrought the deeds of which the record is still prized among our legendary lore.

You would hardly think that a country of such pleasing landscapes as we have seen to day, was barren a hundred years ago. Yet the barrister, before-quoted, who travelled the northern circuit in 1751, has left us a picture which we can compare with the present. After leaving Hexham with his learned brethren, he says—

> "O'er sterile land, th'ensuing day
> The poor strike pity all the way.

To Carlisle city, strong and clean,
Where Virtue dwells, and dwells serene.
Carlisle for lasses debonnaire,
And captains seldom in despair.
Plenty of salmon, cheap and fine;
The poor without it need not dine.
The church, an antient, noble pile,
To visit, worth a stranger's while;
The citizens devout attend;
The decent service all commend.
Castle and walls in good repair
To keep out rebels, should they dare
Britannia to assault again,
Which Heav'n avert, or render vain!
Thanks to our active valiant Duke,
Who gave them their deserv'd rebuke."

"The rest of the Country to Carlisle," says our friend Roger, "was more pleasant and direct; and, bating Hunger and Thirst, which will not be quenched by any Thing to be fastened upon there, but what the Bounty of the Skies affords, was passed over with content. At Carlisle, nothing extraordinary occurred, but good Ale and Small Beer; which was supplied to their Lordships from the Prebends Houses, and they boasted of brewing it at Home: But, being asked with what Malt? they made Answer that it was South Country Malt. For, to say Truth, the Big (viz., a Four-rowed Barley) is seldom ripe; and the Oats, which they call *Yeats*, are commonly first covered with snow."

When Egfrid fortified Carlisle, he gave it with the lands for fifteen miles round to St. Cuthbert, then bishop of Lindisfarne. The site of the ecclesiastical buildings then erected is now, as is supposed, occupied by the cathedral. In common with similar edifices it exhibits different styles of architecture. The nave is used as a parish church, and the effect of the interior is not improved by the wall which separates it from the choir. The east window of nine lights has tracery

that will arrest your steps and compel you to admire as you return by the gallery. The interior is remarkable for the bulk and shortness of the principal columns. While looking at the monuments we are reminded of Paley; and in the north transept, the Tait memorial window will hold you as much by the sentiment it inspires as by the beauty of the design and richness of colour.

From the cathedral I went and walked round the platform of the castle, looking at the various points of view from the embrasures. Then down to the riverside and across the bridge to the fairest walk in the neighbourhood of Carlisle, along the right bank, which, rising somewhat precipitously, overlooks the valley. It appears to be a favourite resort of the citizens; and truly it commands a striking view of the city and the country around, which I sat contemplating from the top of the high bank while the sun went down.

Stanwix, though separated by the river, may be regarded as a suburb of Carlisle. Advantage has been taken of its elevation to build rows of good houses, having a cheerful outlook. But it retains among its primitive features a row of small thatched cottages, which have no upper floor. I went to the churchyard, and looked at the stone cross, which marks the resting-place of the present bishop of London's five children: touching memorial of a great sorrow. Every one to whom I spoke during my stroll, had a word of sympathy for Dean Tait: Carlisle would long remember him and his practical benevolence.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A Trip to the Coast—Exhilarating Sea View—Workington—The Churchyard—Derwent and Cocker—Sea and Mountains—Whitehaven—Beginning of Prosperity—Firedamp and Gas—The Sea Rover—Cliffs—St. Bees Head—Breezy Walk—St. Bees: School and College—The Irish Saint—The Giant—Troubles in Old Times—Nethertown—The Ehen—Sellafield—A Warning—Seascale—Awaking of the Hills—Drigg—Curiosities of Geology—Ravenglass—The Luck of Muncaster—Black Comb and his Prospect—Egremont—A Rustic Town—The Castle—Red Men and Roads—Voyage to Liverpool—The End of a Holiday.

I HAD not yet seen the coast of Cumberland, nor but a small portion of the district lying between the mountains and the sea; and having now but two days left, I resolved to spend them within sight of the western waters, and journeyed thither by the first train on the morrow. The line runs across a level country—rich pastures and fertile fields. Not till many miles are passed does the landscape remind us that we are in the land of the mountains; not till Wigton is left behind, and then the fields swell and undulate, and far off on the right, a big hill rears its three summits towards the clouds; and those summits employ our eye till we stop at Maryport. Here we see a town of recent growth, making progress in a way supposed to be peculiar to the backwoods, or to a new colony, and there are houses on the slope, and a dock and harbour and shipping, where not many years ago the only signs of population were a few cottages and fishing boats.

And there before us spreads the sea, not pale green or the colour of sand, as off the eastern coast, but darkly blue: the blue of the mighty Atlantic. A gladsome thrill flashed through me at coming suddenly on the glorious prospect, the expanse of dancing water, and the broad mouth of the Solway, bounded on the north by the diversified and picturesque coast of Kirkcudbright.

For miles the beach is dull, flat, and stony, and you will hardly regret passing it on wheels, instead of on foot, and so it continues with the railway close to its margin all the way to Workington.

"What's the use of getting out here?" said a bagman with whom I had had a little talk, "It's the dullest place in England. If it had been Cockerm'uth now, I'd have said something to you."

I got out at Workington, nevertheless, though not without confessing that first appearances were in truth tame and dull. Low sand-hills rise on the south; the town, which shows little of picturesque, covers a level, and stretches along the slope past the church, and out to low sand-hills on the north. But as you walk up the street, you note signs of prosperity, and solid comfort. Nothing pretentious and nothing squalid, cleanliness prevails even in the back lanes, and houses poor in outward aspect, exhibit nothing poor inside, as you may see through many an open door and window. Noting this, you will perhaps believe what is commonly said, that Workington is more wealthy and pays more income-tax than any other town of its size in the kingdom.

Here, as in so many other places, the churchyard gate is kept locked; a practice which always makes me feel rebellious. Not liking to be baulked, I searched about,

and found a way in through the vicarage garden, and then was rewarded for my pains by the sight of a church which, as is also usual in these northern counties, has been touched and retouched into distressing ugliness. No architectural grace remains to relieve the effect of large plain sash windows, or to beautify the lights of stained glass at the eastern end.

On one of the stones in the churchyard I read—

Stop My friends When this you See George then John Both went to Sea John lies here Makes Friends to weep But George lies in the Mighty Deep.

On another, a husband speaking to his surviving family says—

My Sickness short, my years but few,
My Partner and children dear I must leave you ;
The Lord he takes me from your care,
To follow me yourselves prepare.
Man's life is but a winter's day,
Some only breakfast, and away ;
Others to dinner stay, and are ful fed,
The oldest man but sups and goes to bed.
Large is his debt who lingers out the day ;
Who goes the soonest has the least to pay.

These, though curious, are outdone by a third, which I could not discover, but of which, by the vicar's kindness, I have been favoured with an exact copy. A Joseph Glendinning, who died by violence in 1808, is made to address his murderers thus:—

You Villains if this Stone you see
Remember that you Murder'd Me
You b^{r}uis'd my Head & pierc'd My H^{e}ar^{t}
Also my Bowels did suffer part.

Workington Hall, the seat of the Curwens, stands on a rising ground on the outskirts of the town; an ancient place, modernised, but with a room still called

the Queen's Chamber, for Mary the Unfortunate slept there after the disastrous battle of Langside. Two hundred years ago it was described as having "brave orchards, gardens, dovecots, and woods and grounds in the bank about, and brave cornfields and meadows below, as like as Chelsay fields." In the days when the lands and houses of the church might be had for the asking, Henry the Eighth said to the worthy knight Sir Thomas, "Curwen, why doth thee begg none of these Abbeys? I wold gratifie thee some way."

Quoth the knight, "I thank you. He afterwards said he wold desire of him the Abbie of Ffurneis (nigh unto him) for 20 one years."

"Take it for ——," and there the chronicler leaves a blank, but we can easily fill it up by imagining that the royal Reformer said—for ever. Be this as it may, Furness Abbey, that picturesque memorial of the Cistercians, which many a holiday-seeker visits on his way to the Lakes, has long ceased to be a possession of the Curwens. And now Cumberland points to the name of Curwen as one of the most praiseworthy among agriculturists.

From the churchyard I strolled to the harbour, where two rivers of the mountains—the Derwent and Cocker—flow swiftly by a crooked channel across the stony beach to the sea. Who would think when rambling by the side of these pretty, romantic streams among the hills, that they would seek so tame an outlet?

The wharf, dusty and shabby-looking, with ships on one side, and on the other a curious jumble of offices, stores, cottages, yards, and a publichouse or two, and crossed by the coal-staithes, is not an inviting place to walk on. Then we come to ship-yards and iron-works where the noise of many hammers betokens active busi-

ness; we pass the QUEEN'S WAREHOUSE, and leave the dusty track for the pier, a rudely-built structure of sandstone, the blocks fastened together with iron clamps, and near the head further secured by a heavy iron chain, stretched from one side to the other. The extremity is defended by what may be described as a wooden cutwater, which breaks the shock of the waves.

If you wish to discover whether it is worth while to stop at Workington, fail not to walk out to the pier-head. For nearly two hours I paced the water-washed masonry, enjoying the glorious prospect, exhilarated by the sight of the sea, and by the saline odour borne on the breeze. Northwards spreads the Solway and the broad blue expanse of St. George's Channel, and there, far, far away stretches out the coast of Galloway, and from the extreme point the land rises higher and higher, with many a ridge and hollow, and headland and bay, till it culminates in the mountain height of Creffill.

It was wonderful to see the play of light and shade on that varied landscape as the morning sun, advancing in strength, melted the last thin flecks of mist from the green slopes and gray summits, and league after league stood up bright and clear, even to the remotest points that look into the Firth of Clyde. Then turning half round to the right, I had before me the grand panorama of the Lake Mountains—Skiddaw and Helvellyn, Sca Fell, and the others, great masses all, of intermingled purple and bronze and green and yellow, diversified by dark moving shadows, as clouds floated slowly between them and the sun. And seeing how the two tall summits regard each other across the low country between, you will remember the popular distich:—

"When Skiddaw wears a cloudy cap
Creffill wots full well o'that."

Then carrying the eye onwards from the end of the mountains, it is arrested by St. Bees' Head, a dark and lofty promontory, thrust far into the waves towards the Isle of Man, which rises, a blue mountain mass, terminating in a crater-like peak, forty miles to seawards. And so, as I walked to and fro across the pierhead, I beheld in turn all the features of the magnificent panorama, surprising combinations of land and water, which no envious mist obscured for all the rest of the day. As the sun rose higher, it seemed that the distance shortened, and the Isle of Man looked as if it were but ten miles off.

It mattered little, I thought, that the shore and the neighbourhood were uninteresting while the horizon offered such glorious compensations, and the minutes flew by full of the joyousness which brings perfection to a holiday. And all the while the clear stream ran swiftly across the pebbles, fraught with tidings from the mountains, to mingle its musical voice with the deep-sounding waves.

But I had to leave it at last, and speed once more along the railway. We are still close to the shore: on our left the ground rises, and after a few miles forms a sandstone cliff. We pass Harrington, a small port, with a smelting-furnace and staithes and ships: encouraging signs of trade. Then Parton, another small port, where fathoms on fathoms of nets hang to dry, and the beach is thronged with fishing-boats. A few minutes more under a cliff increasing in elevation, and we come to Whitehaven, and here we make another halt, but not too long, for I am impatient to mount the cliffs of St. Bees.

The town, built around an inlet, shut in by high hills, which terminate towards the sea in abrupt cliffs, shows that Cumbrians have results of industry to be proud of, as well as grand scenery. We have seen here and there, on the way from Maryport, what trade and enterprise can accomplish, even against natural disadvantages, and here we view the main result. Looking down on the harbour from the steep hillside, you see a crowd of ships, three lighthouses, covered jetties, and seven stone piers. The west pier, built by Sir John Rennie, stretches far into the sea, shelters the anchorage, and forms an agreeable promenade; and around all this you see the town filling the hollow, and advancing up the slope to the high grounds in the rear, while the smoke of colliery chimneys, and staithes and tramways betray the sources of its prosperity. You discover no antiquity; the town is too modern for that.

In 1566, when Queen Elizabeth required a survey of the naval forces of the kingdom, Whitehaven was but a poor little fishing-place of six houses, with one vessel, a "pickard" of eight or ten tons. In 1582 the muster of ships for the whole county by command of the Earl of Lincoln, Lord High Admiral, showed but twelve, and their aggregate tonnage less than one hundred and eighty tons. And again, when England was reckoning her defences against the Armada, the *Bee* of Whitehaven, only ten tons, was the largest ship in Cumberland.

A hundred years later, and we see the beginning of prosperous trade. Sir John Lowther then Lord of the Manor, got a grant from Charles the Second of the lands between high and low water-marks, and built a pier within which a hundred sail could shelter: the neighbouring hills were pierced and made to give up

their thick seams of coal, and fostered by an increasing coal trade, and the discovery of abundant iron ore in the district, the insignificant village has grown into the present large and flourishing town.

At first horizontal galleries sufficed; but when the hills were cleared out, it became necessary to follow the strata downwards, and as these dip to the west the workings crept onwards beneath the sea; and now there are hundreds of miners hewing and blasting day after day at a depth of one hundred and fifty fathoms, while the waves roll and ships sail above their heads. The buildings at the mouths of the pits, particularly the castellated walls of the Wellington pit, are among the most striking objects seen in the view of the harbour. So much has the ground been honeycombed in all directions, that the inhabitants have more than once been alarmed by that "creeping" of the surface, consequent on subsidence underground, which resembles some of the phenomena of an earthquake. When the demand is active the collieries will ship fifteen hundred tons of coal a day; and to say of a ship that she is "Whitehaven-built," is to say that in strength and sailing qualities she is alike excellent.

In the history of the coal-trade we find a few incidents worth notice. One is the sending of fire-damp, as it was called, inclosed in bladders to the Royal Society, in 1733, for examination by the learned chemists who then held their meetings in Crane Court. And about the middle of last century Mr. Spedding, colliery-agent, lighted his office with gas led from the pits by pipes, and he offered to lay on a supply for the whole town; but his offer, as we can easily believe, was not accepted.

The pier presents a lively scene with groups of people

sauntering along it, or idly watching the movement in the harbour. Two steamers arrived while I loitered on the circular head; one from the Isle of Man, stopped for a few minutes off the entrance to put a score of passengers into a boat, and then firing a gun steered away to Silloth, that new port on a dreary part of the Solway; the other from Liverpool came proudly in, and numbers of the throng hurried off to meet their friends. Times are changed since the lawless sea-rover Paul Jones, whom we heard of on the Yorkshire coast, kept this Cumbrian coast in a state of alarm; when, acquainted with this port from having served his apprenticeship on board a Whitehaven vessel, he made an unsuccessful attempt to burn the town in 1778, and indemnified himself for the disappointment by sailing north and plundering the Earl of Selkirk's house in Galloway: when the song was sung—

> "Little do we see, but much do we hear,
> The French and Americans are a' comin' here;
> An' we'll a' be murder'd,
> An' we'll a' be murder'd,
> An' we'll a' be murder'd,
> Before the New Year!"

Get into talk with a man of Whitehaven and you will soon discover that he is proud of his town: he wishes you to admire the regularity with which the streets are laid out, at right angles one with the other; the public buildings; and above all the architectural elevations in Lowther Street. On the hill at the end of this street, as you go out towards Egremont, stands the castle as it is called, one of the seats belonging to the Earl of Lonsdale, built on the site of the mansion erected by Sir John Lowther while Charles the First was fighting for his prerogative. The Lowthers have been important personages in the county for centuries.

When Queen Mary journeyed from Cockermouth to Carlisle, she was escorted by Sir Richard, and he afterwards entertained her at his house as she went under conduct to Bolton.

But it is time to start for another walk; and our shortest way, though not the easiest, is to climb the steep side of Moncarrow Hill, on the left of the port. Our labour is repaid by a good bird's-eye view of the town, and the busy harbour, and that glorious prospect which we saw from the pier at Workington. The route leads us past collieries and along a black coaly road to the broad green slopes and fields that deck the great headland. Gladly did I leave the dusty highway for the footpath that winds up the acclivity to the "sea-brow" or "sea-bru," as the natives pronounce it. The view opens into the broad vale that extends from Whitehaven to St. Bees; Hensingham, the birthplace of Bishop Grindal, looks pleasantly forth from the opposite slope upon the encroachments of the coal-diggers. There is a remarkable pool at Scalegill colliery which first made its appearance in March, 1792. The ground on that spot was observed to tremble and sink; a roar of water was heard as if a mighty stream were rushing into subterranean caverns; and the next day the sink had enlarged into a funnel-like cavity about two hundred feet across, and ninety deep, in which jets of water shot up from time to time with a loud noise, until at length the workings of the colliery were flooded, and the water rising in the cavity formed the pool. The Poe, a little stream running down from the hills falls into it, and two streams flow out of it; one to Whitehaven, the other, the Poe, to fall into the sea at St. Bees. And besides, the pool is now the reservoir whence water is drawn to supply the colliery engines.

We are now so near to the Lake Mountains that their features come out clear and individual, the shouldering heights thrown up into bright relief by the dark shadows of the dales. And with this scene on one side and the broad rolling sea on the other we pursue our way along the broken margin of the cliffs. What can be more delightful? Here are the elements of the fullest enjoyment. Now the path dips and the swelling field on the left shuts out the mountains; now it makes a sudden turn along the edge of a great buttress, and we look down upon an undercliff which, dotted with a cottage or two and striped by winding paths, falls away to the water's-edge, an irregular slope of red rock and patches of verdure. Though not so rich as the crimson cliffs of Sidmouth the colour of the red sandstone here is yet dark enough to satisfy the eye, and contrast beautifully with the fringe of grass and wild flowers above and the changeful belt of seething foam below: and while the brow is bedecked by vegetation the base is worn smooth and polished by the ceaseless dash of the waves. Every jutting crag as we look back presents us with some variety of feature or of tint; or a stone quarry surprises us by the sight of men busily hewing and chiselling, on the face of the cliff, where narrow roads that look inaccessible curve between the great slabs and heaps of refuse, and the rock freshly hewn is of the reddest. And for awhile the view takes in the coast all the way to the Solway, and the scenery that your eye never tires of beyond.

Now my longing for a walk on lofty cliffs was satisfied; without it, my holiday would not have felt complete. I lingered by the way; now reclining among the wild flowers, now sitting on the edge of the precipice, watching the waves as they fretted the solid cliff

a hundred feet beneath. You must not be careful to make short cuts; but follow all the ins and outs, and ups and downs of the cliffs, if you wish thoroughly to enjoy a walk round a great headland. If the short cuts lessen the distance, they cut you off also from curious sights, which can only be seen on the margin, and with them of sources of pleasure and admiration.

At length the mountains are completely hidden, and the view on the left is limited to great rounded slopes rising at the highest to an elevatiou of five hundred feet. On one of the slopes, in a bold position, stands the lighthouse, a low edifice, crowned by a lantern, but visible from far to seaward. A little farther, and there is a sudden descent to a narrow cove with a pebbly beach across its mouth, where, if the tide will permit, it is worth while to scramble down and look at the pretty mosaic produced by the still moist pebbles, and the hollows worn in the cliff. About a mile farther, and we have doubled alike the promontory and the great slopes which shut out the inland prospect, and now we see the mountains once more, and the coast of Cumberland for miles, to its termination in the sombre but majestic cone of Black Comb. Beneath us, in the mouth of the vale, lie the village of St. Bees, and the low square church tower, and the collegiate buildings, wherein Learning has been cherished for nearly three hundred years. The view will hold you for a time in contemplation. We are looking across what was once the barony and forest of Copeland, formerly tenanted by red deer, and as the old chronicler says, "as great hartts and staggs as in any part of England." So thick was the forest that we are told a squirrel might travel from tree to tree for six miles without once touching ground. Some writers

tell us that the vale was a sea channel, whereof traces have been found by the discovery of beds of sea-sand and shells, and an old rusty anchor, somewhere between St. Bees and Whitehaven; and that all the great headland, across which we have walked, was known as Preston Isle. Others deny the evidence, and show that the water-boundary of the island on the hither side was, as at Purbeck, not an arm of the sea, but rivulets.

Let us go down to the village; it is quiet and respectable as befits a place of education, and a modest watering-place. The free grammar school perpetuates the memory of Archbishop Grindal, the founder. Over the door appears an inscription—

E 1587 G
INGREDERE UT PROFICIAS

and on the old bridge which bestrides the Poe may be seen the worthy churchman's coat of arms. The master must be a native of one of the four counties of Cumberland, Westmoreland, York, or Lancaster; but the rule which restricted the freedom of the school to boys of the two former is now relaxed for admissions from all parts. All the scholars are expected to pay a cock-penny, or fee on Shrove Tuesday. Spenser is said to personify Grindal, in the Algrind of his *Shepherd's Calendar*. Strype relates an anecdote concerning him which is worth repeating. When Tunstall died, it was intended to divide the see of Durham, and give one half to Grindal, he being a northern man. "But a great topping courtier put an end to this pious purpose of supplying those parts, where ignorance and superstition most prevailed, with two bishops, for, by his sway, he

got the whole bishoprick dissolved and settled as a temporal estate upon himself." Grindal, however, did not miss the mitre; but the care of the archbishopric of Canterbury brought troubles upon him, for, as bishop Hall says, he was infected with the doctrine, "fished out of the Lake of Geneva."

Besides the school, St. Bees boasts a college, founded in 1817, by Bishop Law, resorted to by young men who wish to study divinity at a moderate expense, and free from the distractions of a large town. They are expected to know the classics before entrance. The course extends over two years, and pains are taken "to form faithful ministers of the gospel, who, as far as their spheres for exertion will permit, may be able to preserve the Church in its original purity, free from those errors which indistinct notions are apt to engender." Never did the Church of England stand more in need of the right kind of faithfulness than at the present day.

Let us stroll to the church where it stands apart on a rising ground. We shall see lancet windows, and a Norman doorway, and an ancient cross on the north side, and inside, a few old monuments. The choir is fitted up as a lecture room for the college. Among the curiosities, are two gigantic stone figures, said to be the lord and lady of Egremont, and on the lady's breast the paw of a wolf, all that remains of an entire figure of the animal carved on the tomb of the Lady Lucy, who was killed by a wolf in the forest.

How the vista into the past opens, as we remember that for more than twelve hundred years St. Bees has been the site of a religious house! From Ireland, that early school of heroic Christian missionaries, came the influence. As Wordsworth sings,—

" When Bega sought of yore the Cumbrian coast,
Tempestuous winds her holy errand cross'd:
She knelt in prayer—the waves their wrath appease;
And, from her vow well weigh'd in Heaven's decrees,
Rose, where she touch'd the strand, the Chantry of St. Bees."

But not without a miracle, as the old writer, before quoted, relates in his quaint style, which I take leave to transcribe. " There was," he says, " a pious, religious lady-abbess, and some of her sisters with her, driven in by stormy wether at Whitehaven, and [the] ship cast away i' th' harbour, and so destitute. And so she went to the lady of Egremont castle for reliefe. That lady, a godly woman, pittied her distress, and desired her lord to give her some place to dwell in; which he did, at the now St. Bees. And she and her sisters sewed and spinned, and wrought carpets and other work, and lived very godly lives, as gott them much love. She desired Lady Egremont to desire her lord to build them a house, and they would lead a religious life together; and many wolde joine with them if they had but a house and land to live upon. Wherewith the Lady Egremont was very well pleased, and spoke to her lord, he had land enough, and [should] give them some to bye up tresure in heaven. And the Lord laughed at the Ladye, and said he would give them as much land as snow fell upon the next morning and in midsummer day. And on the morrow looked out of the castle window to the seaside, two miles from Egremont all was white with snow for three miles together. And thereupon builded this St. Bees Abbie, and give all those lands was snowen unto it, and the town and haven of Whitehaven; and sometimes after all the tithes thereabout, and up the montains, and Inerdale forest, eastward."

The peaceful mission flourished till the Danish sea-

rovers came and laid it waste; and save that a bell in Croyland Abbey was called Bega, the name was well-nigh forgotten. Five centuries rolled away, and on the spot arose a Benedictine Priory, and the monks had grants of land, and tithes, and everything in the forests, except "hart and hind, and boar and hawk," and liberty to take "xiv. salmons." But the monks fared little better than the nuns, and suffered from the ravages of Scottish marauders. In 1315, during the invasion by Robert Bruce, a party under James Douglas pillaged the priory and the manors; and we may imagine the indignities, if nothing worse, which the fathers had to undergo, from a passage in Ivanhoe, where Wamba says, "Pray for them with all my heart, but in the town, not in the greenwood, like the abbot of St. Bees, whom they caused to say mass with an old hollow oak-tree for his stall."

Even two centuries later the churchmen were still harassed by cruel alarms. In 1523, Dan Robert Anlaby, Prior of Sainct Bees, "scryblyd in hast" a letter to Lord William Dacre, Warden of the Marches, beseeching succour, for that a great number of ships had been seen off the coast belonging to the Duke of Albany's company, "and woll," to use the prior's words, "land upon us here in Couplande and destroye us utterly. Wherefore, my speciall good Lorde, I besiche your good Lordship, to regard this pour cost and countrey, whiche belongeth unto your marchies and undre your protection . . . Els I cannot see, but this countrey shalbe utterly destroyed for ever, which God forbide." Let us hope that the "little angle of Cowplande" was saved from harm by so moving a letter from his Lordship's "awne dayely bedeman."

Queen Elizabeth's father had a prize in the priory,

for at the time of the dissolution, the revenues amounted to three thousand pounds a year, present value.

A leap forward brings us to the date of a remarkable discovery, as recorded by a Cumbrian historian. Here are his words :—

"A true Report . . . of a Gyant found at S. Bees, in Cumb'land, 1601, before X^{t}mas.

"The said Gyant was buried 4 yards deep in the ground, w^{ch} is now a corn field.

"He was 4 yards and an half long, and was in complete armour: his sword and battle axe lying by him.

"His sword was two spans broad, and more than 2 yards long.

"The head of his battle-axe a yard long, and the shaft of it all of iron, as thick as a man's thigh, and more than 2 yards long.

"His teeth were six inches long, and 2 inches broad; his forehead was more than 2 spans and a half broad.

"His chine bone could containe 3 pecks of oatmeale."

Two places are mentioned at which the armour and weapons were preserved : but the day wears on, and we will not stay to inquire what has become of the relics. We heard of a giant on our arrival in Cumberland, and now we hear of another on the eve of our departure.

St. Bees lays itself out for the accommodation of visitors in the summer season. Those who prefer a residence close to the shore, may find it with cleanliness and cŏmfort at Grindle's Hotel. Immediately in front spreads the beach, a great slope of loose gray

pebbles, in the midst of which rises a grassy mound, a convenient and much frequented lounging-place. I saw a group of ladies sitting there reading and knitting.

I turned my back on "tall Tomlyn," the last bluff of the headland, from which the cliff sinks down rapidly, and soon becomes a mere bank, and trudged along the toilsome beach. Only on the rough margin of the reedy grass was there anything like firm footing, and that demanded a slow kind of wading. Even here it was interesting to see how nature beautified, sprinkling sea-holly, thrift, rag-wort, and blackberry bushes within a few feet of high-water mark. Near the Nethertown station occurs a floor of rock, firm enough: it is the base of what was a bold sandstone point, of which an enterprising speculator took a lease, and opened a quarry. With a railway close by, and an active demand for stone, he in time hewed the whole point away down to the level of the shore, and left it as we now see it, with eight or nine years of the lease yet to run. Is it wise to allow these natural barriers to be removed? The railway, though protected in places by a wall, suffers at times from the fury of the sea.

To relieve my legs, and change the scene, I crossed the line, and struck a lane which, hedged by brambles, ferns, and foxgloves, runs parallel with the shore. Nethertown is a small and very rustic village, where substantial comfort is not lacking, if one may judge from the sight of flitches of bacon and hams plenteously lodged on the kitchen racks. The lane, as it rises and falls, commands pleasing views, and when you come to Braystones, where it makes a sudden descent between wooded knolls and undulating meadows,

sprinkled with well-kept cots and houses, while Black Comb and some of his companions rise in the background, you discover that this Cumbrian coast region will repay a walk as well as its mountains.

The Ehen, or En, as the natives call it, salutes us with lively ripple at the foot of the descent; and turning inland for about a mile, we come to Beckermont, a prettily secluded village, with an ivy-covered church dedicated to St. John the Baptist, standing on a little hill, preserving in the pointed arch of its porch a relic of the church which appertained to Calder Abbey. The view overlooked by the churchyard is one of those quiet rural scenes which have a soothing charm.

Having seen Calder Abbey a few years ago, I was content to revisit it in imagination while retracing my steps to the shore, or rather the railway, preferring that to the toilsome beach. The Ehen, leaving the pleasant knolls and nooks of the hills, flows through meadows on the left, and presently, crossing the line, takes an almost straight course for a considerable distance between the embankment and the sea, whereby the shore appears but as a long bank, rough with coarse reedy grass. It is, in fact, a long peninsula. The local proverb says,

> "When Ehen meets the Calder
> There's an end to the world."

But though the two streams flow into the sea within a mile of each other, they show at present no disposition to mingle their waters. Caldfell, the source of the Calder, is within sight among the hills.

Still the shore preserves its features: a loose stony beach, backed by low sandhills. The railway, a single

line, runs always within sight of the sea, and the general aspect is monotonous, for the stations are too small for effect, and the villages to which they belong are hidden by rising ground. At Sellafield the station-master, whom I surprised taking his ease in a very undignified attitude by the side of the line, warned me off in tones more and more peremptory; but I refused to take the warning for sundry reasons. It was growing late; the beach, as already mentioned, exacted too much labour; there were streams to be waded; and to find another road would require a long walk inland. So, notwithstanding the shouts, I kept along the line, which, after all, was not very agreeable walking, and ended my day's travel at Seascale between twelve and thirteen miles from Whitehaven; but perhaps half as much again by the wandering route I had followed.

Arrived at Seascale you see the station, an inn with its outbuildings in the rear, a shore line of low sand-hills, a cottage on one, and a flagstaff on another, and a beach where—welcome change—sand prevails over pebbles and rocks. A scene tame enough, if you are willing to admit that any shore can be tame on which the sea pours its multitudinous life twice a day, and makes its noise continually. The Seascale hotel wears the clean and comfortable look which, to a tired way-farer, has more attraction than show and glitter. I suppose I looked tired, for the waitress recommended me to lie down on the "sawfa," until she had got tea ready. The house had been full of guests, families who had stayed for two or three weeks' bathing; but they had all departed, and their successors had not arrived; hence the place was very quiet, and salmon trout were so plentiful, that I had enough for a feast

with my tea, and to spare; and so well did they taste, that I bespoke a dish for next morning's breakfast.

I rose early on the morrow, remembering that it was my last day. The young day was all smiles, and the sea still danced to the shore with the same cheerful noise as for the last twenty-four hours, and the grass glistened with dewdrops. I went to the flagstaff mound, and sat there watching the day's advance, and listening to the sounds, "the chirp, the hum, song, low, and bleat," that multiply therewith.

> "I saw the mountains, like young kings
> Rejoicing as they threw
> The clouds their nightly mantles off—

and stand forth bright, fresh, and glorious, as if from a new creation. Mona, encircled by the sea, kept her mantle on till the sun grew higher, at times showing one extremity, then the other, then her double mountain peak for a moment, until the misty garment melted away leaving not a fleck upon the blue. I sat there feasting my eyes, and refreshing my heart, until the claims of the day would no longer be put off.

The mound, low as it is, commands an extensive prospect; miles of coast, and the whole range of mountains, separated by the master peak of Scafell, as it seems, into two groups, heaving magnificent masses against the sky. They approach so near, about seven miles, that I could look across into the grim dark shadow of Wastdale, one of the most impressive scenes which the hills engirdle. And now having seen both sides of the county I concluded that visitors to the Lakes might with advantage vary their route, and make for Seascale as the starting-point instead of Windermere.

They would find the view of the hills while speeding along the coast a rare treat to begin with; Seascale affords good quarters and carriages at pleasure; then there is the drive to Gosforth, an attractive village where, after looking at the curious old cross in the churchyard, they will find the surrounding prospect hold them in contemplation. Thence to Netherwastdale is about three miles, and there from the foot of the lake the view opens into the wildest and grandest of the mountain scenery. Think of coming suddenly in sight of the Screes, and of Great Gable, Ling Mell, Yewbarrow, and their brethren in majesty!

To see a little more of the coast, I took the first train and went four miles farther to Ravenglass. Midway we stopped at Drigg, a well-to-do village, famed all along the line for the view its viaduct commands of the hill country. It stands on the Irt, an active mountain stream, teeming with fish, the joy of anglers. The farmers here say that the fields on one side of the Irt are all sand, and all clay on the other; and they boast of growing the best potatoes in Cumberland. Drigg has besides, two endowed schools, a chalybeate spring, and is within an easy distance of Wastwater, Devock Water, and Stanley Gill. And of other attractions, its name retains in a modified form Derigh or Dergh, which in the Scottish and Irish signify oak. The country was once thickly covered with oaks, and remains of ancient forests are discovered at times while cutting drains; and at low water traces of peat mosses are laid bare; evidences of encroachments of the sea.

There was once a pearl-fishery at the mouth of the Irt, and of sufficient importance to be made the subject of a royal patent; but the mussels which produced

the pearls gradually disappeared after more than a thousand pounds' worth had been collected, and were succeeded by a species known as the horse-mussel, of which a few specimens are occasionally found in the mud. Among the natural curiosities of the neighbourhood is a huge boulder lying on the beach, of the stone known to geologists as syenite; and to account for its presence on a spot far from other rocks of the same kind, the simple-minded folk ascribed it as usual to diabolical agency. Satan was bent on building a bridge to the Isle of Man, this being the nearest part of the coast to that little dependency, and came flying hither with the stone in his apron, when the string broke, the ponderous burden fell, and in proof thereof still lies imbedded in the sand, and retains the mark of the apron string. Science on the other hand, shows that the rock is a fragment drifted from the parent mass in the mountains, and that the mark is a quartzose vein encircling it in a regular line. If that be not the explanation, we can only say with Goethe,—

> "—— der Philosoph, er weiss es nicht zu fassen,
> Da liegt der Fels, man muss ihn liegen lassen."

In 1813, two well-known geologists—Greenough and Buckland, whose names now belong to the past—visited Drigg to investigate a remarkable phenomenon, the occurrence of glass tubes in the sand-drifts of the seashore. Their search was repaid by the discovery of three tubes, of one inch and a half in diameter, and of unknown length, standing perpendicular within one single hillock. Outside they had the rough appearance of partially fused sand, while the inside was quite smooth and glass-like, and of so hard a nature as to scratch ordinary glass. Desirous to ascertain the

length, the explorers dug down to a depth of twenty-nine feet, and there found to their surprise that the tube struck a fragment of porphyry, in a bed of pebbles, and glancing off, continued its course underneath, vertical as before. Notwithstanding the sudden break, it retained the tubular form, but altered in quality, having become tender, so that it broke on further digging, yet at thirty feet showed no signs of termination. On experimenting with the blow-pipe, it was found that similar glass could be produced from the surrounding sand, and the inference drawn was that these curious tubes were specimens of Nature's handiwork; formed by electricity. Although low, the hillocks stand first in the way of a storm blowing in from the sea, and once struck by the shock, the intense heat generated by an electric discharge would account for the presence of these natural tubes in the drifted sand. And besides all this, Drigg boasts a mineral spring of considerable local reputation.

Ravenglass has a poetical name—the river of blue streams: but seen at low water, when a brown muddy estuary through which the streams of the Irt, Mite, and Esk flow with many a curve to the sea, it looks somewhat melancholy. Its street has an air of quiet respectability, a quiet seldom disturbed by naval operations, for the village owns but one vessel. Where are now the shoals of herrings that used to swarm so thickly in the sea, that "a ship could not sail thorow them?" The annual fair, however, remains, and the sports and pastimes—the horse-races and men-races, and wrestling and quoiting. And if you turn your back to the sea, you notice how prettily the marine phenomena are intruded on by the rural. Gently rounded hills, sprinkled with trees and shaded by

woods, among which lie snug little farms, stretch away rising one beyond the other to the great bare slopes of the mountains. A walk of about a mile inland brings us to Muncaster, the seat of an ancient family—the Penningtons, who sheltered Henry the Sixth on his flight from the fatal field of Towton, and who, in acknowledgment of their loyalty, were presented by the monarch with an enamelled glass bowl, which, while kept in the family should, if the giver's prayer might avail, betoken prosperity to the house and heirs male without interruption. This, we are told, is the true history of the Luck of Muncaster. One of the chambers in the castle is still known as King Henry's bedroom; and a painting represents the royal fugitive kneeling before an altar, holding the Luck in his hand.

The church, standing in the park among masses of foliage, with its walls and embrasures mantled with ivy, is a pleasing and impressive object. It contains numerous monuments which would inspire the more interest were they as old in reality as in appearance. The greater part, however, were set up towards the close of last century by John, first Lord Muncaster, the same to whose industrious planting we are now indebted for the forest-like appearance of the landscape. He followed the example set by Sheriff Stanley, who planted a hundred thousand trees in the neighbourhood of Calder Abbey; and grateful emotions from all who wander beneath the ample shades shall honour their memory.

By walking eastwards up Muncaster Fell you can widen your prospect at pleasure—and overlook all the wooded region at the foot of the hills; the site of the ancient camp, known as the ruins of the city of

Barnscar, and the country towards Black Comb, from whose summit

> "The amplest range
> Of unobstructed prospect may be seen
> That British ground commands: low dusky tracts,
> Where Trent is nursed, far southward! Cambrian hills
> To the south-west, a multitudinous show;
> And, in a line of eyesight link'd with these,
> The hoary peaks of Scotland that give birth
> To Tiviot's stream, to Annan, Tweed, and Clyde:
> Crowding the quarter whence the sun comes forth
> Gigantic mountains rough with crags: beneath,
> Right at the imperial station's western base,
> Main ocean, breaking audibly, and stretch'd
> Far into silent regions blue and pale,
> And visibly engirding Mona's Isle."

I lingered in contemplation and enjoyment of the scene, until the advancing hours warned me to depart. So far I had reason to be well content with my ramble on the coast of Cumberland. It made me aware of scenes of grandeur, and quiet beauty, and strange contrasts; and now but little remained unvisited, for I had explored the vale of Duddon, and the sequestered ruins of Furness in a former holiday, before their solitudes were intruded on by the railway. Yet I would fain have had a few days more to wander hither and thither, along all the ins and outs of the shore, into every lane and vale, finding out all the antiquities, whether of the Druids, who named the mountains, and left their monuments on the wildest fells.

I returned by rail to Nethertown, and walked thence about three miles, through pleasant lanes sprinkled with bramble and fox-gloves, to Egremont, passing farmhouses and cottages, of which the doors are protected by a gabled portico, and the windows decorated by a border of black paint. It was market-day at Egremont, yet the town appeared unable to shake off

its chronic dulness. A group of farmers stood solemnly discussing the merits of fifteen sacks of grain; the two principal inns seemed to be converted for the day into butcher's shops, so numerous were the joints of meat hanging on each side of the doors; and here and there a woman making haste with her weekly cleaning, was ruddling her doorstep. The church has been churchwardenised into ugliness quite as remorselessly as in other parts of the county, and how much it has suffered may be inferred from the four lancet windows at the east end, which still do honour to the original architect. I could hardly help fancying, while sauntering among the tombs, that the churchwardens had a finger in the epitaphs. Here is a specimen, composed on a little fellow of six:—

> Physician's skill, no human art could save
> This lovely blossom from the silent grave,
> Sweet was his temper, Disposition mild
> In sickness patient for so young a child.

On a grassy eminence at the edge of the town, stand the remains of Egremont castle, a ruin which retains but little of the picturesque, yet repays you for the ascent by the surrounding prospect. Having failed to discover who kept the key, I went through a carpenter's yard, and got over a low wall in the rear, and was soon on the hill. The Ehen runs briskly past the foot of the slope, tumbles with a cheerful noise over a dam, and speeds onwards under overhanging trees, and all around a hilly landscape meets the eye. The town lies beneath, clustered under irregular masses of grey slate roofs; and here and there the chimney of a flax mill reveals the haunt of industry. There is more life in the place after all than one might have supposed.

The gateway is the best preserved portion of the ruin. In the wall on the left you may see eight or ten courses of what builders call herring-bone work—that is, thin flat stones placed zigzag-wise, with the edges outwards. It is a style of work seldom met with, and is said to denote great antiquity: examples of it appear in the old walls at Lincoln, at Colchester, and the castle at Guildford. Imperfect as the remains are, we can see that Egremont Castle was no puny fortress: the traces of the moat are visible, and when William de Meschines built the one and dug the other, shortly after the Conquest, he secured himself with a stronghold befitting a lord of the barony of Copeland. This William was brother of Ranulph, Earl of Chester, who had the whole county of Cumberland as a gift from the Conqueror.

History, so often garrulous over a ruin, tells us but little concerning Egremont. We find associated with it some of our Yorkshire names—William Le Gros; Rumely, of Skipton; the Lucys, then the Percys and Wyndhams. Of these the Lucys are remembered for a treacherous adventure that befell in the time of the Crusades, when, as Wordsworth tells the story—

> "Ere the Brothers through the gateway
> Issued forth with old and young,
> To the Horn Sir Eustace pointed,
> Which for ages there had hung.
> Horn it was which none could sound,
> No one upon living ground,
> Save He who came as rightful heir
> To Egremont's Domains and Castle fair."

Right pleasant was it sitting there in the sunshine, and not without reluctance did I leave my soft seat on the turf and take the high road to Whitehaven, for a finishing walk of five miles. On commencing our walk

yesterday we found the road black, here for about half the distance it is bright red, and red carts laden with red iron ore and driven by red men or boys are rumbling along to the port or the smelting-furnace. The ore which is of the kind termed hematite, is abundant in the neighbourhood, as also at Ulverstone, where as many a tourist will remember, it produces the same effect of colour on the roads and the miners. The red has a not unpleasing effect, seen between green hedgerows and lines of trees. Cumberland is now as likely to become famous for iron as for lead and coal.

The long ascent brings you to an elevation, whence the view opens on the vale of St Bees and away to the sea. Then a long descent made disagreeable by the noise and dust from train after train of carts, and we come once more to Whitehaven; and my month's walk of nearly four hundred miles is ended.

At four in the afternoon, I went on board the steamer for Liverpool. The sunshine still prevailed, and as we passed the Head, the lights and shades of the mighty range of cliffs appeared with marvellous effect, and the dip of the strata to the south was easily discernible. Then the mountains appeared, filling the view between the Head and Black Comb, a glorious range, still showing as two groups with Scafell as the central link. I could not tire of gazing at them, and as the movement of the vessel brought the peaks into new positions, I thought that from no other point of view had I ever seen the great mountain picture to more magnificent effect.

Later we passed Walney Island, and the promontory over which Black Comb holds dominion; and the great expanse of Morecambe Bay seemed like another great sea opening on the east. Beyond it rose the hills of

Yorkshire; and before us in the south-west the mountains of Caernarvonshire loomed in great purple masses against the evening sky. Then the sun went down in wondrous pomp, and for a few minutes the darkening waters rolled and gleamed all ruddy and golden, as it were with a supernatural splendour that awed the beholder. By-and-by the gleam of lights far ahead, some stationary, some revolving, indicated our approach to the Mersey; one after another we left those solitary floating beacons behind; then a cry went round that we were passing the Bell buoy; twinkling lights multiplied; frequent and quick came the warnings from the look-out as we sped into the throng of vessels on their way to the port, and sharp and brief the steersman's voice in reply sounded far-off in the darkness. Anon, with a great sweep, we approached the long row of lamps that fringe the quays of Liverpool, and at half an hour before midnight we stepped on shore. And so my holiday ended with glorious impressions of the mountains and of the sea.

AFTER-CHAPTER.

An After-journey—Haltwhistle again—Cawfields Castle—The Wall—Rustic Philosophy—A Good Son—Coins and Bodles—Peel Crag—A Scrap from Camden—Can a Working-man get on?—Housesteads and the Romans—Haydon Bridge—What Rome built the Wall for—Groups of Miners—The Smelt Mill—A Good Library—A Pack of Harriers—On to the Hills—Bleak Landscape—Allenheads—Treacherous Ground—That Sweep—A Good School—Happy Results—Thrifty Miners—Down the Lead-mine—Melodious Schoolmaster—Hydraulic Engines—Wonderful Mining Operations—Economy of Water—Newcastle—The Two Candidates—Acklington—Felton—Winter having his own Way—Weldon Brig—Brinkburn—The Boys and the Pig.

When, after my return to London, I let the Chief Agent know of my adventure in Allendale, he was somewhat surprised, and more than once inquired whether I could not repeat my visit to that remote mining region, where many interesting things remained to be seen. For my part, I wanted to see that part of the Roman Wall which I had missed, between Housesteads and Carvorran, and had heard something concerning Brinkburn which made me wish to have another look at that venerable ruin, so I promised to take a supplementary trip to Northumberland, and travel up Allendale, even to Allenheads, its upper extremity, in the flanks of Kilhope Law. I was enabled to keep my promise in the second week of April of this present year, 1859.

My start was a night journey to Carlisle, during which my thoughts ran back to their month of summer

travel. The lights and shades of the wayfarer's day re-appear in his after experience, and it seemed to me almost as if I had numerous homes in Northumberland. Eslington had written, promising me such a "hearty welcome" if I would but "come again;" Chillingham the same; Keeldar had sent me a brace of woodcocks packed in some of "the very hay that I helped to make in the buttery haugh, that I might get a smell of it." Most delightful odour, as indeed was to be expected. But there came a sad word with the friendly message from Chillingham; the kind-hearted lady who poured out the refreshing cup of tea on that sultry July afternoon was carried to the churchyard ere the end of the year.

"Merry Carlisle" looked anything but merry, as I walked through pouring rain from one station to the other to catch the first train on the Newcastle line. Not very promising, I thought, for a walk along the crags. However, while I tarried to breakfast at Haltwhistle, the steady downpour broke up into showers. "It had been raining for a week," said the hostess, who, by the way, gave me a further piece of information which I must not forget to mention, namely, that since July a baker had set up in the town, and the folk found it nice to be able to get hot rolls for breakfast. In other respects the town is unaltered: the surgeon still lives under ancient thatch; *Stick no Bills on this Prison* still adorns the side of a small stone edifice; and the cottagers know no more about Housesteads than they did months ago, and that is nothing. I asked two or three who stood lounging at their doors, by way of experiment, how far it was to the old Roman city, and all replied, "Never heard tell o't."

I walked up the hill, across Haltwhistle Common, got a distant view of Æsica—Great Chesters, and struck the Wall at the gap named by Dr. Bruce, Pilgrims' Gap, where stands Cawfields Castle, the most perfect of the mile-castles between the two seas. It is a good specimen of these defensive structures: walls from nine to ten feet thick, inclosing a parallelogram of sixty-three feet by forty-nine. On the western side nine courses of stone remain in place: wonderful masonry, considering its age and history! The Great Wall forms its northern side, and in this, as well as in the southern wall, the gateways remain ten feet in width, solidly built of huge blocks; and there may be seen the recess into which the gate folded back, and the pivot holes in the lower stones. Eloquent vestiges these of the original builders, of the indomitable legions—

> "Who, conqu'ring, came to civilise,
> And dignify the wrong."

We are here upon that remarkable range of crags, mentioned in a former chapter, and by keeping along their summit to Housesteads we shall see the best-preserved portion of the Wall. In some places the cliff rises to five hundred feet of perpendicular height, presenting a mighty rampart to the north, and giving us, as it seems, an ever-widening prospect. After all I had a delightful walk, for the clouds broke up, and the damp lazy air worked itself into a vigorous breeze; and yard by yard there ran the Wall, in places higher than my head, exhibiting here and there gratifying signs of the intelligent, and I may say affectionate, care bestowed thereon by Mr. Clayton.

I need not go into particulars, and tell of the climbing over fences, the steep descent into gaps, at Thorny

Doors, or Caw Gap, or Bogle Hole, and the laborious climb up the opposite side; the more laborious after rain. A lonely cottage, which probably stands on the site of a mile castle, bears the name of Shield-on-the-Wall; then, Bloody Gap—a word of fearful import—breaks the ridge; then a wide depression, in which stands a solitary farmhouse, Steel-rig, with a view to the east of the grand range of cliffs which there re-appears, crowned by the Wall.

A labouring man whom I overtook invited me into the house, for a furious squall had begun to blow, with sleet and rain. He lived on Haltwhistle Common, and had come three miles with a pail to visit his father and mother, and carry home milk for his own family. The old folk were both lying down when we entered, because, as the mother explained, "it did an old body good to tak' a bit rest o' Sundays, and there was no church near hand to go to." However, she quickly rose, and set about preparing dinner. They were but "puir folk," she said, "but if I could make out with what they had I was vera welcome." They had no meat, and no beer; nothing but eggs and tea, and barley bread, and household bread, and home-made currant cakes. "The very thing for a damp, chilly day," I said, and soon we all four sat down to table. In the talk that followed, I heard what was to me an interesting domestic history: how that the father's wages rarely amounted to more than fifteen shillings a week; that a family of ten daughters and one son had been reared up respectably, though it was "shifty wark" at times, with no more than half-a-crown a day; "and it's no easy," said the happy-looking old dame, "for the lasses to help themselves, and earn their own living, as 'tis for the lads. But wur lad was a good

yane; he would na marry till his sisters were a' provided for; and. he stayed at home and helped his father;" and she looked at her son with a loving eye as she spoke.

Then the old man told that he had worked for years on the Wall, employed by Mr. Clayton, clearing away rubbish, repairing dilapidations, and doing his best to preserve the old things. It was he who had laid bare most of the relics at Housesteads, and he had found, altogether, a peck of coin, some silver, but most copper, about the size of a—he paused,—"Of a bodle," interrupted the dame; and she went on to say that she remembered when bodles were in circulation, and how that formerly she would now and then bring home half a dozen pounds of wheaten flour from market to make a cake as a special treat for the bairns. Now they could eat wheaten bread every day; but still she liked best the griddle cakes made with oatmeal and barley: there was more strength in that sort of bread. Somehow they had always managed to keep a cow for the sake of the bairns; children could do with milk; and as for meat, "If we could na get it we just wanted it. And whiles we could get only a little bit, and then we made a few broth, and wur bairns supped that, and so a' got a taste." And this old woman is still hale and hearty, and though past her sixtieth year walks to Haltwhistle market once a week with her butter, where she gets from tenpence to a shilling a pound for it, according to season. A rise to thirteenpence has sometimes occurred, and filled buyers and sellers alike with alarm.

The squall lasted for nearly two hours. When it "faired up," the son said he had not seen Housesteads for some months, and as it was not more than three

miles off would like to accompany me. Away we trudged through the dripping pastures, across the sedgy hollow at the foot of the cliff—Peel Crag—and scrambling up the gap next beyond, were soon on one of the loftiest elevations of the range; the highest ground between the two seas, whence, says Dr. Bruce, the Solway may be seen. I, however, could not discern it, although the clear intervals of rainy weather are favourable for distant views.

We may remember here that geographers describe this part of the island as the Lower Isthmus, the upper isthmus being the region between Forth and Clyde. Across each the Romans constructed a rampart; but the northernmost was only an earthen vallum. Camden's words apply here, where, having passed the latitude of Lincoln in his progress northwards, he says, "Britain, which has thus far bulged out into several promontories, coming gradually nearer, on one side to Germany, and on the other to Ireland; does now (as if it were afraid of the breaking in of the ocean) draw itself in on each side, retires farther from its neighbours; and is contracted into a much narrower breadth."

At Crag Lough a long and broad lake washes the foot of the cliffs, and the other lakes are in sight which we saw last summer from the heights of Sewingshields, and the landscape is enlivened by the expanse of gleaming water. Very delightfully might a fine afternoon be lounged away on the top of these crags.

My companion by his talk proved himself one of the thoughtful sort, and asked me, as we sauntered along, with, as I thought, a slight touch of despair in his tone —"How is a working-man with only eighteen shillings a week to get on? He may be as careful as he likes;

but with wages like that he must always be a working-man; and 'tis hard on a man as feels he could do better if he had but the chance." The problem was one not to be solved off-hand; and I could only repeat what I have said before, that nine-tenths of us are born to be what is called "people," and we must make up our minds thereto as a great terrestrial fact: that in such a conclusion we by no means debar ourselves of happiness, for every path in life has its flowers, and we may plant more if we will: that to have something to do is not a curse, but a blessing; and that even on eighteen shillings a week a man may bring up a family, and with the aid of an honest benefit society make some provision for his old age.

"Well," answered the other, "there's truth in that; but I should like to give my bairns a good education; for 'tisn't as it used to be; a man is called on now to work wi' his head as well as his hands. But at times work runs short, and what then? Last backend I had no work for two months."

"And how did you pass your time?"

"Well, I worked in the garden a bit, and looked after the bees; they brought me in a pound: and I made baskets, and gave 'em away to neighbours. 'Tis good neighbourhood where I live now, and I like to do what I can to keep it up. We got something to eat; but we had to want meat all the time. However, wur bairns is but young, and we kept them up wi' a sup milk."

"Would you be single again, if you could?"

"Na, that I wouldn't! A man feels best after a' when he has a wife and bairns of his own. And then 'tis a pleasure to sit down by the fire and read a bit o' evenin's; or talk about what the bairns shall do when

they're ready to work. Na, I wouldn't be single again. I shouldn't think trouble o' anything if work was always sure."

"So, after all, there are flowers about the eighteen-shillings-a-week path?"

"Well," he answered, "there is. I've got a comfortable home to sit down in when my day's work's over; and my wife knows how to keep it so. She's fond o' readin' too, and can tell ye where to find anything in the Bible. You see she comes from near hand Scotland."

Then I said that it was in every man's power to get on morally, by doing whatever he had to do in the best possible way; and so, still talking on the subject, we came to Housesteads, and walked all over the ancient city from wall to wall on every side. It is a place that will bear a second visit. My companion had seen many a picnic party there; once as many as a hundred dining all together on the grass; and he said that the people who lived in the cottage on the southern slope were commonly spoken of in the neighbourhood as "the Romans."

Then we parted, and I walked across the pastures and down the lanes to Haydon Bridge. But what a walk! The green turf that feels so dry and elastic in July, was all sponge and swamp; and at every gate the cattle had trodden the ground into a quagmire, and the drains and brooks in the over-fulness of their joy chose in places to run along or across the paths, so that half the distance was a weary, slimy trudge. However one grows the stronger for such fatigues; and when I came at nightfall to the *Anchor*, and instead of "We canna' put ye up," found a ready welcome and a bright fire, I forgot all but the agreeable impressions of the day. I

had accomplished so far that which I purposed; and now let us take leave of the Wall with a suggestive passage from a paper read by Professor J. Phillips to the Yorkshire Philosophical Society. "How complete," he says, "appears the grasp of the Roman treasury on the mining fields of Britain. The Fossway from the Ocrynian promontory crosses the Mendip Hills. The road from Mancunium (Manchester) to Bremetonacum (Overburrow?) traverses the calamine district of Bowland. The road from Derventio (Derby?) or Tutbury to Mancunium runs along the west of the great Derbyshire field, and the legionary path from Carlisle to York goes right across the metalliferous country of Yorkshire and Durham.

"We may even ask, with some confidence, whether the line of the Hadrian Wall, which cuts off from the north all the richest mines of the Derwent, the Allen, and the Tyne, but abandons the mossy dales of bleak Northumbria, was not drawn with especial reference to the mining wealth of the districts?"

Early the next morning I started for Allendale. On my way up the hill I met troops of young men and boys, each carrying a good store of provision in a clean white bag. They were going they said, to work in "the groves at Settlingstones," giving to the *o* the sound of the French *eu*, which not understanding at first, I asked for an explanation, when they all burst into a hearty peal of laughter, and showed such rows of big white teeth. Groves is the miners' term for the underground levels; and these lads, having passed the Sunday at home, were going to their work three miles north of Haydon Bridge, carrying a week's provision with them. I like at times to test wayfarers by a little pleasantry,

and pointing to the well-stuffed wallet of a young fellow in the next party, asked, "Do you eat all that in one day?"

"Whiles aw tak' two," he retorted, with a grin.

A little farther and another replied to the same question, "Aw 'll try," and he grinned.

Last July I could only hear the brook which runs down the hollow by the roadside, for it was hidden by leaves. Now the trees had but just put on a flush of green and I could see the lively stream as well as hear it, and all its cascades and rapids; and the banks, sprinkled with thousands of primroses were a feast for the eye, notwithstanding the sullenness of the morning.

"Vawy clarty," says a rustic, as he looks at my splashes. True enough it was very muddy.

From the height above Catton I saw the hills that separate Allendale from Weardale, bleak and dreary, a long range from Kilhope Law to the eastwards, with rags of mist hanging about their summits. The nearer hills are, however, surprisingly green, and every one says the grass is "a month forwarder than usual."

The old manager held out his hand when I came to the smelt-mill, and offered to show me everything; but as there were only one or two small particulars that I cared to refresh my memory with in the mill, I took most pleasure in looking at the library, kept in a room over the counting-house, for the use of the men and any of the clerks and other inhabitants who choose to subscribe. Of the eleven hundred volumes, two hundred and fifty are set apart and lent gratis to children; among the others I noticed the works of Macaulay, Scott, De Quincey, Mc Culloch, Erman's Travels, Chambers's Journal, and other periodicals of that well-known firm, Frazer's Magazine, Bentley's

Miscellany, besides books of Natural History, the Microscope, Field Sports, and such like. So good a selection betokens a disposition for good reading; but inquiry here, as elsewhere, elicits the reply, that the most amusing books are the most in request. And so they ought to be. For workmen the subscription is a shilling a quarter; for clerks and others, two shillings; and the same sums for a whole year after four years' regular payment.

Then I must go up to the house and take a bit of lunch, and I could not help being amused by the assiduity with which the old gentleman pushed the sherry across to my side of the table, saying, "Tak' another glass: ye were very coldly treated here last July." During our chat, I had to tell him that of all the wonderful things in Allendale, he seemed to me the most wonderful, for though seventy-six years of age he still follows the hounds, and is indeed the Master of the Hunt. A pack of harriers is kept, and the miners and other residents go out once or twice a week during the season, sometimes to Allenheads, sometimes crossing the hills to Whitfield, following the dogs on foot, and have rare sport, and good exercise.

"And do you run?" I asked.

"Ay, that I do," answered the old gentleman.

"And can you get over a stone fence?"

"Ay, I can get over a dyke fine;" and he told me that one hundred and thirty hares had been killed in the last season, of which the dogs devoured fifty or sixty before the men could run in to stop them. He grew quite animated over the subject, and ended with "there shall not want hounds in Allendale while I live."

Then I started to walk to Allenheads, seven miles farther. "Ha! ye are fortunate this time," cried the venerable Master, as he accompanied me to the gate, "for there's Mrs. Bewick going up in Mr. Sopwith's carriage, and ye'll get a seat wi' her." Even so, and away we went; but not so rapidly as to prevent my seeing that Allentown looked as dull and lifeless as ever, and that all the shingle was not yet trodden in. Now, the road was new to me: it rises higher and higher, and the dale along which flows the East Allen becomes apparently deeper and deeper. The lower slopes are very green: cots are scattered here and there, on small patches of meadow, or struggling gardens, sheltered by a few trees; but as we proceed, every mile is barer than the last. Anon, a wooden edifice, somewhat resembling an Italian campanile, appears down by the riverside, at Holmes' Linn, marking one of the places where busy works are going on, for the driving of the Blackett Level in search of lead veins. The campanile or tower, contains the accumulator of the high-pressure hydraulic engine which is to do all the pumping and "winding" done in other places by steam. At distances of about a mile and a-half we pass two similar edifices. Higher and higher rises the road, and the rags of mist, as they seemed to me in the distance, prove to be snow on the hills; and, with a gloomy sky hanging over head, the range of white summits imparts an Alpine character to the scene.

We pass St. Peter's, the mother church of the dale; then the little village of Dirtpot—what a name!—lying in the hollow; then we come to rows of work-shops, long rows of bouse-teams and bing-steads on each side of an acre or more of washing-floors, where

men and boys are working with noise and activity; a wooden tower, within which is one of the entrances of the lead-mines; a row of buildings containing the offices, the library, and reading-room, and we are in Allenheads, one of the most elevated places in England, situate fourteen hundred feet above the sea. It lies, nevertheless, deep within the hollow of the hills, and has all the appearance of a place which has taken to decent ways. It was very different twenty years ago.

The people about here are all employed in mining operations, and I am told that Allenheads is to be regarded rather as the nucleus, containing a few shops, and an inn, of the houses scattered over this part of the dale, than as a village. On a level above the rest, stands a large house, one of Mr. Beaumont's residences, with a pleasant garden and shrubberies about it. In a commanding position on the opposite side of the valley stands the schoolhouse, enjoying or not, according to weather, a wide prospect. Below it, approached by a tree-bordered causeway, is the chapel-of-ease; beyond, a patch of firs clings to the hill-side, and slopes of firs crowd upon the course of the Allen for about a mile to the south; all the rest is bare, bleak hill, over which roads run to Rookhope, to Weardale, and to West Allendale. There is another house in the hollow not far from the offices, which attracts the eye by its pretty bank of rock-work and ferns, overhung by a few trees, among which is a laburnum that blooms in July.

It was significant of the locality, that the carriage could not draw up to the gate of this house, because of two deep holes that had sunk a few days before, by the giving way of something underground. They had, it is true, been filled up more than once with refuse from

the washing floor; but who could tell whether they might not sink again with the weight of a carriage? So it was best to be cautious. It may be exciting, but certainly is not comfortable to live in a place where the bottom of your cellar may fall out without warning, or you may step from your door into a pit which has opened in the night. However, if miners will dig out the heart of the hills they must take the consequences.

I felt sure, by my conversation with Mrs. Bewick on the way up, that Mr. Bewick would prove to be all I could desire. Nor was I disappointed. The sound of the wheels brought him running out, and the expression of his eye and the grasp of his hand made me at once as sure of him as of a brother.

Of course, a village situate near the top of some of our highest hills, which disputes with Hexham the honour of being "the heart of Britain," presents some peculiar phenomena. Allenheads sweeps its chimneys only once a year, and that is in April, and the annual house-cleaning follows. During a stroll shortly after my arrival, I saw the sweep standing on a roof jerking his weighted brush up and down the chimney by a rope, as if it were a bucket in a well; which is perhaps the primitive way. I soon found that the sooty functionary was an important personage; every house was in a state of discomfort because of "that sweep." Because of "that sweep" the piano was swathed up, and no music could be had; "that sweep" has been here to day, said a miner's wife, who gave me leave to look at her house, upstairs and down, and who had not yet got things put to rights; all through "that sweep," a bagman at *Allenheads Inn* had to stand at the door in a snow-storm before breakfast, and smoke his cigar till "the room was fit to sit

down in;" in short, "that sweep" made everybody uncomfortable.

Not only the hill-tops, but the whole landscape was white with snow the next morning; the washing-floor could not begin work in consequence till near noon. I could not help thinking that Allenheads must be the place where a stranger, afflicted by the terrible weather, asked, "Does it always rain here?" and got for answer, "Na, it snaws whiles." But when a fine day does occur, it is worth ten of the fine days that gladden the lowlands. In some years the quantity of rain is double that which falls in Middlesex; and it is a good year which has a hundred days free from rain or snow. The inhabitants are lucky in having employment underground out of the way of foul weather.

We thus see that Nature is not remarkable for geniality in Allenheads; so much the more reason perhaps that man should do the more, and here happily he has not shirked his responsibility. The present Mr. Beaumont does not forget that property has duties as well as rights and privileges, in which he is warmly seconded by the Chief Agent.

Mr. Beaumont, aided by the subscriptions of other gentlemen, has built new school-houses in different parts of the district. The old makeshift has been replaced by new washing-floors, new offices, new storehouses and workshops, and proper machinery. Mr. Beaumont aids the Benefit Society fund by an annual contribution of five per cent. on the year's subscriptions, and of two per cent. on all properly invested funds? Lectures to the miners, and books for prizes to the school are occasionally given by Mr. Sopwith. Spite of bad weather, there is so much of praiseworthy in Allenheads, that I wished Thomas

Carlyle, who has written something wise about "Captains of Industry," would go and see it.

So good a school-house as that which stands high up on the slope, with a wide outlook over hill and valley, deserved a good schoolmaster, and a good one it has—a Scotchman. The boys' school is at one end of the building; the girls' on the other; the residence of the master and mistress between the two. I was in the school a minute before nine; yet every scholar was in place, though some had come two or three miles; and punctuality is the rule. The place was built ten years ago, but the plaster is sound and unblemished, and the forms and desks are as clean and undefaced as new. You look in vain for an ink-stain, or for the notching and hacking usual where the boys carry pocket-knives, as these do. Mr. Sopwith thought that a habit of punctuality, of order and cleanliness, of the self-restraint induced by avoidance of mischief, would not only have a beneficial effect on the children, present and prospective, but through them on the parents; and he was not mistaken. In my opinion the development of conscience and conscientiousness is the most important part of education: it is the part most neglected in our modern education. I was, therefore, the more gratified to see a system at work which aims at something beyond mere cleverness and a quick memory, and has especial reference to the actual duties of maturer age; and I am quite ready to believe that the School Inspectors who visit Allenheads, find it in bright and hopeful contrast to other places.

What a clattering there was of brass-clasped clogs on the stone floor, as the girls came into the boys' school to take part in the singing and prayer with

which the daily duty commences. Then followed more singing, during which, at my request, they had leave to sing anything they liked best, and it was a pleasure to hear with what spirit they struck up—

"Will you, will you, will you, will you come to the woods!"

and with the more effect from their having a pretty fair notion of harmony, while the master joined in with his musical bass. Then when it was time for the girls to retire, the boys with a one—two—three—four, marching-tune, sang them out.

Then the classes showed me how expert they were in arithmetic, how well they could write, and books full of drawings, in which the progress from year to year was obvious. Many a man might envy these miners' children their skill with the pencil. Then followed an object-lesson, and when he came to the egg, the master mentioned that in all the time he had had charge of Allenheads school, there was but one boy who had pulled a bird's-nest. And he told how that once when he asked the school if they knew what a mat was, a little fellow named Matthew, stood forward and said, "Please sir, I's a Mat."

"All you that have seen the sea, hold up your hands," said the master.

Among some forty or fifty children, three raised their hands. They had once been to Tynemouth with their parents.

"Hold up your hands, all you that have seen wheat growing."

Five hands were held up.

At first it seems almost incredible that any one in England should not have seen wheat growing. It is however, a fact that demonstrates the elevation of

Allenheads above the sea-level, without the trouble of measurement. And if we remember that village children are not travellers, and that to see wheat growing the children here must go seven miles—down to Allentown, we need not attribute the fewness of the hands held up, as some have, to a species of heathenism.

Hitherto the results of the school are satisfactory; the children feel that they are sympathised with, and that advancement is possible. Boys who prove themselves competent are taken into the office as clerks, here or at Allentown, or at Newcastle. The master of the school at Sinderford, four miles down the dale, was a miner but a few years ago. The incumbent of Allentown is a miner's son. A few miners at Coalcleugh published a selection of poems, and four of them wrote a pamphlet, entitled *Practical Illustrations of the Benefits to be derived from Well-conducted Friendly Societies.* And besides this, I may mention, on the authority of Mr. Bewick, that bastardy has much diminished of late years in Allenheads.

The miners' wages vary from fifteen to twenty shillings a-week; payment is made by an advance of two pounds "subsistence money," every four weeks, and the balance once a year. In contrasting the amount with their labour; we must bear in mind, that the miners' day is but eight hours, and for five days only in the week. Hence, they have much time to work for themselves, if they will, in their gardens, or meadows, or fields. Their great ambition is to possess a little freehold, and many of them save money enough to accomplish their desire; and you may see their cottages scattered on the hillsides, showing cheerful patches of green around them. They have a Benefit

Society and a Building Society, both flourishing: with respect to the former, it is worthy of remark, that not one has yet applied for a deferred annuity payable at the age of seventy. Not one expects to live to seventy.

After two hours in the school, I went back to my room, put on a miner's suit of fustian, a rough round-crowned broad-brimmed hat, and then made myself over for awhile to Mr. Curry, inspector of the mine. It was almost like going down a well, to descend the shaft, so copious is the drip from the sides. The depth is seventy-seven fathoms, but we stopped at a level—or random, as the miners call it—forty-two fathoms down, and there getting into a narrow wagon, each holding a candle stuck in a lump of clay, were driven away at a trot, "to the west end of Henry." This time I felt no painful loss of light, and had but little difficulty in seeing, the reason being, perhaps, that I descended from April gloom, not July sunshine. If you feel crushed in a coal-mine, much more so here, where the ways are so narrow, but little wider than the wagon, and you must sit still if you would avoid bruising your head against the limestone. Having rattled on a mile and a-half, I learned that Henry was the name of a vein; and here we got out and walked, and I saw how the vein of lead had been in places eight or nine feet thick, how it thinned off in places to an inch or two, in places to nothing, and was only traceable by the black line in the rock where the smooth shining surfaces come together, known to miners as slickensides. I saw veins of fluor-spar, intersected by threads of metal, and the various strata—limestone, shale, and clay, and in one of the veins a number of cavities full of beautiful crystals: wondrously beautiful they looked in the candle-light,

like fairy grottoes. We crawled at times on hands and knees; we climbed and descended perpendicular ladders twenty fathoms or more, through openings so narrow, that with an inch or two additional breadth of shoulder you would stick. "'Tis grievesome wark," said an old miner, who came panting up one of these chimney-like passages; "but that was aye a weary way-gate." And so we came to the "forehead," or one of the utmost extremities, where the men were working naked to the waist, and the heat and closeness were sickening; at least to my unaccustomed senses. I felt nothing like it in the Holywell coal-pit. Yet, as Mr. Curry says, ladies have been down here.

We spent three hours in our subterranean travel, during which my only regret was that Mr. Curry should have undertaken so irksome a task on my account. Yet his patience was exemplary; and it was not his fault if I did not fully understand everything we saw. Then we returned to the wagon, and went up to shiver in the snow.

I should fill another volume were I to say all that might well be said concerning Allenheads; as it is I am warned by the tale of my pages to hasten to a conclusion. Briefly, then, I had a twilight walk up the hill towards Rookhope, as far as the last trees: all beyond is wild bleak fell: there it was that Sir William Armstrong first tried his new gun. No fear of hitting anything up there except stones or ling. What a comfort it was to go back and sit by the fire, and hear the schoolmaster sing, *Willie brew'd a peck o' maut*, whereby he rose in my esteem; for I hold it essential to the usefulness of either clergyman or schoolmaster, that he should be ready to share in honest amusement.

Then as Scotland had acquitted himself so musically, London had to tune up his pipe, and I sang *Yankee Doodle* with appropriate nasillation: a song never before heard in those parts.

When I saw the forty-horse hydraulic engines doing all the work of the mines, the winding, the pumping, the hotching, driving a newly-invented slime-separating machine, I felt that the sight was worth the journey to Allendale. It seems to me that there is a touch of real genius in thus demonstrating the importance and availability of a natural power; a power that does its duty quietly, requiring not to roar tremendously when it stops, as if to say, See how clever I am! There is no steam-engine used at any of Mr. Beaumont's mines.

Space fails me to tell about the storehouses, saw-mill, forge, powder-magazine, the library and reading-room, and other appliances. Some notion may be formed of the magnitude of the operations from the fact that, including Allenheads, and the mines on the West Allen, and in Weardale, fourteen hundred dozen pounds of candles are burnt every month. But in so far as it can be described in a few lines, I must say something about the wonderful economy of water-power. From a reservoir on the hill-side, 180 feet above Allenheads, the water descends, impels the two hydraulic engines, does all the work of the washing-floors, drives the lathes, the saws, the machinery in the machine-shop, keeps four wheels going deep under-ground, which pump water from the deepest levels of the mine, then escaping by an adit, it flows into the Allen about a mile to the north. Not long, however, does it run at liberty, for intercepted by a race, it flows along that for two miles to Breckon Hill—the first shaft on the Blackett Level—there turns two wheels that

force water into the accumulator, and is discharged again into the Allen. Three-eighths of a mile farther it follows another race, works a corn-mill, and falls once more into the Allen. Then another race to Sipton—the second shaft on the Blackett Level—and two more wheels and another accumulator, from which it has a quarter of a mile to itself in the Allen. Then another race, another corn-mill, and yet another race to Holmes' Linn, where it will have to drive three large wheels, and perhaps supply a washing-floor. Once more it falls into the Allen, flows two miles, turns another corn-mill, from which it runs half a mile underground to work the great wheel of Allen smelt-mill. After that it runs freely in its own channel. And besides all this, the Allen carries away all the refuse cast into it at Allenheads.

In the afternoon of my third day, I walked down the course of the Allen, and along the new Blackett Level, in company with Mr. Bewick. This level is to be driven seven miles underground, running north and south, to explore for lead veins which run east and west; and is a noteworthy example of mining enterprise. It is for the drainage of this level that the three high-pressure hydraulic engines, with their tall accumulators, are erected on the three sites already named. The walk was a clear case of pursuit of knowledge under difficulties, so miry was the ground; however, it enabled me, while adding to my own stores of information, to admire Mr. Bewick's knowledge, and skill, and patience. He made me aware that springs miles away, mere threads of water, might be led to a wheel and utilised; and to think of a distant hillside as traversed by these arteries of industry, imparted an unusual interest to its presence in the landscape.

Then with a drive through a snow-storm, and a walk down the road, clartier than ever, I returned to Haydon Bridge and went to Newcastle. There I had the pleasure of an interview with Dr. Bruce, who showed me the proofs of his forthcoming catalogue of Roman Antiquities; and the opportunity of hearing once more what the shipmen talked about over their dinner in the eating-house on the quay. This time it was, "Ah! there's a chance for us now. It's all very well for Mr. Lindsay to talk and promise, but he isn't going to get in again for Shields. The Duke's agent's nephew is candidate there now, and of course he carries great influence, and means to go in for fair-play for ships. Still he wouldn't get in with all his influence, if Lindsay wasn't in favour of letting foreigners run away with our trade."

By an evening train I went on to Acklington, and walked thence across fields to Felton. It is not very light at eight o'clock in the evening in April; but the station-master, or station-clerk, whichever it was, at Acklington, gave me another taste of stupidity by misdirection, and I might have floundered about half the night in the plashy meadows, had I not met a weaver, who, being a Cumbrian, could feel thankful that he was not as Northumbrians are, and that he could give a plain answer to a plain question. The next morning I walked to Weldon Brig to breakfast, most of the way along a miry cross-country lane, made worse by a tremendous snow-storm that came on just as I started, and let Winter have his own way for a couple of hours. Doubly acceptable seemed the breakfast, with trout fresh from the Coquet, by a good fire in the landlady's little parlour.

Then I went to look at Brinkburn, and saw that

what I had heard was true. It has been restored, and now—with new buttresses, patched walls and columns, repaired mouldings, the belfry accessible by a spiral stair, and a new-tiled roof which exhibits whitewash inside between the rafters—it only waits interior fittings to be once more available as a place of worship. The ivy has been stripped from the tower, and the jackdaws, driven from their old haunt, keep up a perpetual remonstrance from the tops of the neighbouring trees.

"It all depends on the preacher," said one of the masons, whom I asked as to the prospect of getting a congregation; "we don't mind going five or six miles o'Sundays to hear a man that can keep us awake. But if 'tis only to sleep, we can do that at home."

The foreman who told me he was "fro' Aberdeen," thought it a pity that he had not been ordered to "point" the old walls all over, to make them match with the new work, thereby proving himself of the same school as some of our modern architects, who mistake smoothness, and what they call "finish," for architectural effect.

Whither next?—I had an invitation in my pocket to Wallington, Sir Walter Trevelyan's pleasant seat: once a stronghold of the Jacobites, now famous for hospitality and its museum of natural history; but the thought of walking thither, thirteen miles, by cross-country roads in such weather, was too formidable even for me. So I returned to the inn, and taking the highway, tramped the ten miles to the railway station at Morpeth. From the top of the long hill up which the road ascends from the Coquet, I had a view on one hand of old Simonside rising grandly aloft, clad in his wintry robe; on the other, of the sea.

In the village of Long Horsley I saw three boys driving a pig; one holding a string perhaps twenty-five feet long, fastened to the grunter's hind leg; the other two each armed with a whip, making vigorous demonstrations after the manner of boys. Tickled at the sight, I exclaimed, "What! does it take you three to drive one pig? In my country one boy will drive forty pigs."

"Hey, but no sic pigs as thot yane," answered the one who held the string.

Piggy, however, kept well on a-head, as if liking a tight rein, giving no trouble to anybody. As the procession descended the hill from the village, the two boys cracking their whips, a young fellow working on a midden on the farther bank stopped to look down on it. I stopped too, and calling across the road to him asked, "Which o'them four's the cleverest?"

He went off at once into contortions, and a hoarse hu, hu, hu, haw, haw, haw, ho, ho, ho! but at last came his reply struggling forth:—

"The fawst yane."—The foremost one.

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